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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

IN

WESTERN CANADA

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HISTORY

OF THE

Catholic Church

IN WESTERN CANADA

From Lake Superior to the Pacific

(1659-1895)

BY

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With Maps and Illustrations

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PART IV

The Red River Troubles

CHAPTER XXII.

CAUSES AND LEGITIMACY OF THE RED RIVER INSURRECTION.

1860-1869.

It is not without misgivings that the historian of the Catholic Church in Western Canada comes upon the years 1869-70. Everyone knows the trite saying that history is a conspiracy against truth. We doubt if there is a period in the whole past of man in America to which that remark can be more appropriately applied. Hence, in order to reproduce the events of those troubled times with the complexion that is really theirs, we must run counter to the fables and fabrication, the groundless surmises and misrepresentations which racial and religious prejudices have so far given as the expression of truth in nearly all English works.

While we firmly propose to continue in our rôle of dispassionate historian, we run the risk of being accused of partizanship simply because our knowledge of the real facts, their causes and effects, bids

us keep clear of the slanders, gratuitous innuendoes and erroneous assertions with which English-speaking readers have hitherto been regaled.[1] It were more pleasant to dismiss with a few words as irrelevant to our subject the troubles that agitated the little world of Red River in 1869-70, and very nearly had the most serious consequences for Canada and even the British Empire. But we cannot without forfeiting our claim to truthfulness and honesty conceal the fact that Catholics were the mainspring of the whole movement, and we will admit without the least difficulty that in this they had the sympathy of their clergy. Hence we feel bound to delineate, though as briefly as possible, consistent with intelligibility, the principal phases of that movement which prejudice and an unreasoning disposition of mind would fain represent as a rebellion. We only regret that the scope of our work, religious rather than profane history, dictates to us a reserve which must perforce militate against the complete understanding of the events we are about to narrate, and must likewise prevent us from revealing the wealth of proofs and corroborative statements at our command.[2]

And lest we might be suspected of partiality, we shall in this and the next chapters adhere to our

[1]Let it be understood once for all that, as we have made of that particular question an exhaustive study, we are in a position to substantiate every one of our statements.

[2]*Deo volente* and health permitting, we may later on write a full history of the Red River Insurrection.

policy of quoting in support of our assertions only from Protestant and official authorities.

At the time we have now reached, the population of Red River was 11,500, very sharply divided into two sections: French or Catholic, and English, generally Protestant, the former slightly predominating in numbers. Yet, as the immense majority was of mixed blood, and the halfbreeds, whether English or French, realized their close relationship on their mothers' side no less than the equality of their social condition, perfect harmony reigned between the two sections. They had now practically rallied round the truly patriarchal rule of the Hudson's Bay Company represented by the Council of Assiniboia, as the Company had since 1849 abandoned its monopolistic ideas, and the governing body which was so closely affiliated with it sinned certainly more by an excess of leniency than by an excessive severity. It was an open secret that the law-abiding dispositions of the settlers had more to do with the peace and order reigning in the colony than any show of coercive power on the part of its rulers.

Unfortunately, some restless minds hailing from the Province of Ontario had, ever since 1860, striven to sow the seeds of discord and discontent, founding a newspaper, the *Nor'wester,* whose chief mission seems to have been to revile the Hudson's Bay Company and represent to outsiders the people of Red River as groaning under its yoke. The leader of the malcontents, all strangers to the country they

decried, was a Dr. John Christian Schultz, a young physician who owned for some time the colony's paper and endeavoured to create in Ontario a movement of emigration to the Red River, with the avowed object of upsetting the institutions and the social conditions prevailing there.

So little did he care for legality and order that, on one occasion, he publicly defied the authorities of the colony, and had himself liberated by a rabble of his followers from the jail, where he had been incarcerated (1866). In 1867 his efforts resulted in a score of Ontarians coming west, which naturally rendered him even bolder.

Meanwhile the new Dominion of Canada coveted Assiniboia and the whole Northwest. For let not the reader lose sight of this all important fact: at that time Assiniboia (to-day Manitoba) was politically an entirely distinct country from Canada. Both were on a footing of equality: different colonies depending from the Imperial Government at London. Yet as the Dominion was desirous of extending her frontiers westward, she treated with the Hudson's Bay Company with a view to buying out her charter rights to that country, without in the least minding what its inhabitants would think of the transaction. It was agreed that Assiniboia and the Northwest would be turned over to Canada for a consideration of £300,000 sterling, which was to be paid the Company on the day of the proposed transfer, that is, the first of December, 1869.

Bearing in mind the arrogance of the handful of men who represented themselves as the forerunners and special friends of the Canadians who were to rule over this new part of the Dominion, the population, both English and French, found it extremely surprising that they should not be consulted on the advisability of their being made over to a power whose agents were acting as their worst enemies.[3] In the summer of 1868, articles which appeared in a Montreal paper told the Easterners of the mistake that was being made; but those warnings remained unheeded. Bishop Taché himself verbally represented to Sir George Cartier, one of the two foremost members of the Ottawa cabinet, that elementary prudence demanded that an experienced man should be sent to Red River to study the question. But His Lordship was told that he did not understand politics.

The prelate did not insist, for just then his mind was engrossed with other problems. As a result of innumerable swarms of grasshoppers that fell on the land, everything of a vegetable nature had been eaten up in the Red River valley (1868). By July there was not an ounce of provisions to be sold in the whole colony. In this extremity the United States came to the assistance of the people with a sum of money (£900); Ontario promised more but gave less, while the Hudson's Bay Company did

[3]The Ottawa authorities had represented the country as peopled only by a few tribes of Indians and some free traders and trappers.

more than both combined, donating to the relief fund upwards of six thousand pounds. On the other hand, the Governor and Council of Assiniboia voted the sum of £250 especially for the Catholics threatened with famine, and as a result of special collections in the churches of the archdiocese of Quebec $3,200 was sent to the Bishop of St. Boniface, to which were added various other sums contributed by the Bishop of Montreal and other prelates. Mgr. Taché was greatly consoled by those generous alms, and thanked the donors in a letter dated January 16, 1869.

As to the Federal Government, they took advantage of the distress in Red River to force their agents upon the country. In the fall of 1868, they sent two gentlemen, Messrs. John A. Snow and Charles Mair,[4] to make a wagon road from Oak Point to the Lake of the Woods. The Governor of Assiniboia, Mr. William McTavish, protested immediately against the intrusion of the representatives of another power into his own territory; but Canada, who knew perfectly well that it had no rights whatever in that colony, did not heed the representations of the western governor. Its agents went on with the work, paying in provisions valuated at exorbitant prices the work of the men they employed.

[4]The latter was a writer of no mean order, who, "after having received the hospitality of many families, saw fit to ridicule in public print those who had entertained him" (Begg, "The Creation of Manitoba," p. 17). "Mr. Snow was fined ten pounds for having given liquor to the Indians." (*Ibid., ibid.*)

This created dissatisfaction, but was nothing compared with what was to follow. Several of the officials, after having intoxicated the Indians, made them sign deeds whereby most valuable tracts of land in and around Oak Point, on which French half-breeds were already settled, and to which the said Indians had no manner of right, were surrendered to the strangers from Ontario. Dr. George Bryce himself cannot help admitting in a work which is chiefly remarkable for the evidences of anti-Catholic feelings it contains, that "the evidently selfish and grasping spirit shown in this expedition sent to survey and build the Dawson Road,[5] yet turning aside to claim unoccupied lands, to sow the seeds of doubt and suspicion in the minds of a people hitherto secluded from the world, was most unpatriotic and dangerous. It cannot be denied, in addition, that the course of a few prominent leaders, who had made an illegitimate use of the *Nor'wester* newspaper, had tended to keep the community in a state of alienation and turmoil."[6]

Contemporary authors and Protestants put on their oath are agreed that those strangers did not confine their covetousness to "unoccupied" lands.[7] Moreover, those parties were constantly hinting at

[5]So called from having been built in accordance with the 1859 survey of J. S. Dawson, to whom we have already referred.

[6]"History of the Hudson's Bay Company," pp. 458, 459.

[7]See, for instance, Begg's "The Creation of Manitoba," p. 21; Andrew G. B. Bannatyne, in "Rep. Select Com.," Ottawa, 1874, p. 123; John H. McTavish, *ibid.*, p. 1.

the eviction of the rightful owners of the land, which would result as a matter of course from the transaction under consideration at London. "It is a well-known fact that the man who professed to be the leader of the party openly declared that the half-breeds of Red River would have to give way before Canadians, and that the country would never succeed until they were displaced altogether."[8] The half-breeds who, through their mothers, had the very best title to the land and were passionately attached thereto, were to be ousted, and might esteem themselves fortunate if the forthcoming Ontarians would condescend to retain them as cart-drivers.

No wonder, therefore, if the secretary of the Council of Assiniboia should have later on declared on oath that "it was very generally believed or apprehended among the people generally, but to a greater extent among the French halfbreeds, that the whole country would be appropriated or monopolized by the newcomers."[9] "I myself shared that apprehension," he adds. And one of the most prominent gentlemen employed at Fort Garry likewise remarked in his own sworn testimony: "The English also felt that the surveys were improper," because conducted on land not belonging to the government by whose orders they were made, and also because they affected estates already occupied.[10]

[8]Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
[9]"Rep. Sel. Com.," p. 115.
[10]*Ibid.*, John H. McTavish, p. 1.

While the public mind was thus disturbed, it was learned that, though Canada had as yet no jurisdiction over Assiniboia, she had named to rule it a governor in the person of the Hon. William McDougall, the Ottawa Minister of Public Works, who was known to be unfriendly to the French Catholics and who "held frequent communication with the leader of the so-called 'Canadian Party.' "[11] The identity of his views with those of the "arrogant exponents of Canadian policy in Red River,"[12] was soon confirmed by the appointment of Col. John Stoughton Dennis, who "arrived with a staff of surveyors to divide and subdivide the land into sections as they saw fit."[13] All these strangers now fell victims to a perfect land fever. They staked out for themselves and friends in Ontario what pleased them of the best lands, and their leader appropriated enough "to make him one of the largest landed proprietors in the Dominion,"[14] had he been allowed to take possession of it. Finally, it began to look as if no man's property was safe.[15]

Now we might ask any fair-minded reader: Is not the right of property one of the most sacred privileges of a free manhood? To put the question is tantamount to answering it. That right is so inalienable that even a legitimate government must

[11]Begg, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
[12]*Ibid.*, p. 23.
[13]*Ibid.*, p. 24.
[14]*Ibid.*, p. 25.
[15]*Op. cit.*, p. 26.

recognize it, so that the people of Red River would have been warranted in resisting forcibly the ruthless expropriation of their land by their own government. When that expropriation is attempted by an outside government which has absolutely no jurisdiction over them, the right of resistance is doubly clear.

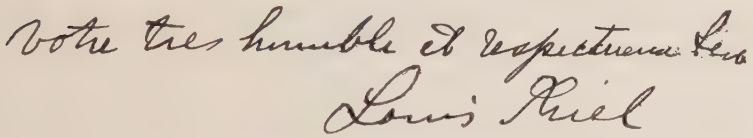
Of this the Catholic halfbreeds, with many of their Protestant brethren,[16] were convinced. One of their chief religious advisers, Rev. Mr. Ritchot, of St. Norbert, was not of a different opinion, especially as among the threats uttered by the Ontarians in Assiniboia, several referred clearly to the destruction of those religious rights which Catholics had so far enjoyed.

Fortunately for the cause of the inhabitants of the colony, English and French, there was then at St. Vital a man who, in spite of his youth and consequent shortcomings, was to prove able to cope with the difficulty. This was Louis Riel, the eldest son of the tribune of 1849. Born at St. Boniface, October 22, 1844, of Louis J. Riel, a halfbreed,[17] and Julie Lagimodière, the daughter, by a French Canadian, of the very first white woman who had the courage

[16]While feeling strongly on the question, the English halfbreeds being threatened neither in their language nor in their religion, their objections to Ottawa rule could not reasonably be as strong as with the Métis, against whom the threats of the Ontarians were especially directed.

[17]According to well-informed Lord Wolseley, Louis Riel "was born of French-Canadian parents," and "he had not a drop of Indian blood in him." ("The Red River Expedition," p. 213, in Blackwood Magazine, vol. I).

to settle (1807) in what was then the wild West,[18] he had been sent east, in 1858, by Mgr. Taché, who thought he might have a vocation to the priesthood, and made his classical studies in the College of Montreal.



LOUIS RIEL'S SIGNATURE.

He had commenced his philosophy course when the death of his father (January 21, 1864), and his lack of aptitudes for the ecclesiastical state, caused his return to the west. There he was a witness to the outrages and threats already mentioned, and gradually, though only twenty-five years old, he was drawn by the vortex of events into taking the lead in the movement of protestation against the encroachments of Ottawa.

Before proceeding with an outline of the measures which were taken to resist those encroachments and force the Federal authorities to acknowledge the rights of the Assiniboians of both origins, we must be allowed to examine a question which is being constantly raised by ignorance and prejudice. The Red River insurrection has very commonly been styled a rebellion by English authors. This accusation is

[18]Marie Anne Gaboury, born 6th Nov., 1782, at Maskinongé, P.Q.; died in the neighbourhood of St. Boniface at the age of ninety-six.

simply preposterous, nay, perfectly ridiculous, in the eyes of such as are familiar with history, and have not abdicated all claims to be regarded as endowed with the faculty of reasoning. There never was a rebellion at Red River.[19] For against whom did the halfbreeds and the whites rise? Against the Government of Ottawa, such as represented by their agents, Schultz and Bown and Dennis and McDougall. But what right had that government to the colony of Assiniboia? Absolutely none until the 15th of July, 1870, when, in virtue of a formal transfer effected by the Imperial authorities, after Ottawa had expressly consented to do what she should have thought of before sending any agents west (that is, guarantee the rights of the colonists), Assiniboia became part of the Dominion under the name of Manitoba.

Before that date Assiniboia was with regard to Canada in the same position as Newfoundland is today, with this aggravating circumstance that over one-half of her population differed in language and religion from that part of Canada, Ontario, which insisted on the acquisition of the western territories. This is so evident that the Colonial-Secretary, Lord Granville, plainly admitted in a letter to Father Lestanc, the rights of the halfbreeds to refuse to enter the Confederation. Moreover, the very fact that, owing to the objections of the latter, the date of

[19]Except that of the Canadians against the Government the country had, with scarcely a dissenting voice, momentarily given itself.

the transfer of their country to Canada was changed at London from the 1st of December, 1869, to the 15th of July of the following year, is clear evidence that they were perfectly justified in declining to play into the hands of the Ottawa politicians.

The reader must not lose sight of this all-important fact, if he wishes to be in a position to judge sanely what was to follow. It is a fact that the most bigoted anti-Catholic cannot deny, and which ought to shame him into refraining from using in connection with the Red River troubles a word which is in itself a slander.

There would have been a rebellion if Riel and his friends had ever renounced their allegiance to the British Crown. But, in spite of the most violent hatred and unfounded prejudices which his very name has long sufficed to evoke among a certain class of Canadians, it is now proved without the shadow of a doubt, and admitted by all fair-minded Protestants who are at all conversant with the question, that Riel ever was and remained to the last favourable to the British connection. Great were the inducements offered him by Americans[20] to falter in his allegiance, but he would not hear of any proposals the acceptance of which would have made

[20] "Outside of the Fenian associations, the Provisional Government of Red River repudiated offers that might have seduced its members, had the sentiment of allegiance not prevailed; sums of money amounting to more than four millions of dollars ($4,000,000), men and arms, had been offered, and the whole was refused by these 'rebels.'" (Archbishop Taché, in a letter to His Excellency the Governor-General of Canada, Hamilton, 23rd July, 1870, "N. W. Committee Evidence," p. 42).

him traitor to his Sovereign. We might remark that his loyalty was all the more commendable, as he had constantly to struggle with one of his own associates, O'Donoghue, whom the wish to secure the good-will of the Irish portion of the population had led him to admit into his administration in spite of his anti-British proclivities.[21] Nay, we will even see in our next chapter that Canadians must probably thank Riel and his halfbreeds for the fact that all the territory west of the Lake of the Woods is to-day part of their country.

Owing to an unfortunate occurrence which raised anti-Catholic passions to the boiling point, most of

[21]A perhaps more weighty reason for keeping O'Donoghue in his administration may be found in the fact that the young Irishman had uncommon aptitudes for bookkeeping and all that pertains to the duties of an accountant. In an unpublished memoir on the troubles of 1869-70, Rev. Mr. L. Raymond Giroux, one of the priests stationed at St. Boniface at the time, has the following: "Mr. Riel, who had at heart the British connection, was one day complaining to me that O'Donoghue was striving to give the movement an annexationist complexion. But, he said, I am in absolute need of him; he administers his department with care, and treats exceedingly well the halfbreeds, of whom he has become the idol."

William B. O'Donoghue was first met (June, 1868) by Bishop Grandin and Mr. Giroux, at Port Huron, Michigan, as the prelate and his companions were proceeding to Red River. The young man having offered his services for the western missions, he became a member of the little caravan. At St. Boniface he was appointed Professor of Mathematics in the college, and commenced at the same time his own studies with a view to entering the ecclesiastical state. Mr. Giroux avers that he was an able man, well grounded in his faith, of temperate habits, and an excellent professor. Our informant feels indignant at the epithet of "scoundrel" given him by "ignorant Dr. Bryce," adding: "He was a gentleman in the strictest meaning of the term." For our own part, we cannot help remarking that, in view of his avowed anti-British sentiments, he was, to say the least, in an anomalous position when he served in a government that professed an undivided allegiance to the Queen. It would have been more honourable for him to step out, or at least keep his political preferences for himself.

the English writers can scarcely have a kind word for Louis Riel. Nevertheless, even his greatest enemies could not help acknowledging his fidelity to the British institutions, a fact which is all the more significant as his well-known impulsiveness and excitable dispositions might, in the face of the many provocations from those who seemed to claim a monopoly of loyalty, have betrayed him into imprudent acts or words, had he not been so firmly grounded in his pro-British sentiments.

A few passages from the official documents of the time will amply corroborate our assertions. Under date, December 16, 1869, Mr. (afterwards Sir) John A. Macdonald, admitted in his "Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council" that the resistance of the halfbreeds (and consequently of their leader as well) "is evidently not against the sovereignty of Her Majesty or the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, but to the assumption of the government by Canada."[22] Can any proof of our contention be stronger than this confession of him who, with Sir George Cartier, had been the chief, though involuntary, cause of the whole trouble? But three days earlier, Mr. Wm. McDougall himself admitted this loyalty in a letter he wrote to Riel, wherein he said: "As the representative of the Sovereign,[23] to whom you and they [the

[22]Correspondence relative to the Recent Disturbances in the Red River Settlement," p. 53. London, 1870.

[23]He speaks of himself, though he was never invested with that function.

halfbreeds] owe, and, as I am told, do not wish to deny allegiance, it is proper that some such communication should reach me.''[24]

This trust in Riel's pro-British sentiments was based on the reports of spies the would-be governor was keeping among the disaffected halfbreeds. Such were the loyal sentiments of the latter that on December 6, 1869, the same party wrote to the Secretary of State at Ottawa that the production of his own spurious proclamation (wherein he claimed to have received from the Queen authority that was never delegated to him) ''had a most tranquillizing effect. Riel said: 'This puts a different face on the matter,' and, as my informant says, 'expressed much loyalty.' He appealed to the English delegates (some of whom still remained in his convention, to watch his proceedings) to help him *peacefully* get their rights.''[25] The italics are McDougall's himself.

That this attachment to the British connection was persevered in is shown by a dispatch from the Governor of Canada to Earl Granville. That high official wired to the Colonial Secretary: ''The latest news from Red River is that a convention, half French, half English, met on January 25th. Riel opened the proceedings with a loyal speech.''[26] This was dated February 15, 1870.

In case the reader should require additional evi-

[24] ''Correspondence,'' etc., p. 72.
[25] *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

dence of Riel's sympathies for British institutions, here is a passage from the sworn deposition of a prominent English-speaking and Protestant Assiniboian, Mr. Bannatyne, which refers to a period, late in the history of the Red River troubles, when the halfbreed leader was beset by a crowd of Americans bent on bringing him over to their own political aspirations: "At the time of the publication of the *New Nation*,[27] it was altogether American. I heard from Riel that he would never work for annexation to the States. I saw Mr. Coldwell, who was connected with the paper, and told him that Riel had told me that the next issue would be stronger than the previous one, but that it would be the last. Mr. Coldwell said that if he could do that he was an abler man than he believed him; immediately after, the editor was put out of place, and another editor put in, and the tone of the paper was changed. Riel said he was willing to take assistance from all quarters; but as soon as he was strong enough, he would repudiate the American element. I know that Stutzman [a pro-American agitator] came down from Pembina about this time, and shortly after was sent away by Riel on short notice."[28]

Useless to add to the foregoing any further remark than this: Riel's loyalty to the British Crown was so intense that, later on, when he had been proscribed as a criminal and a premium had been

[27] The paper of the local Government.

[28] "Preliminary Investigation," etc., p. 73.

placed on his head by the Government of Ontario, which had then no more jurisdiction over Manitoba than Canada had in 1869 over Assiniboia; when the fate of the new province and the Northwest was in his hands, he had only to join with his sympathizers, the Fenian invaders of that territory, who had counted on his coöperation for the success of their cause, to see the entire Northwest pass into the hands of the Americans. Nevertheless he manfully forgot the wrongs heaped upon his devoted head, and offered his services to the representative of the Crown, thereby rendering abortive efforts which, though secretly abetted by powerful influences, could not succeed without the assistance of the French population.

Two points are therefore established beyond the possibility of cavil; firstly, the people of Assiniboia had excellent reasons for rising in 1869, and, secondly, their rising was not a rebellion against legitimate authority, but a protestation against the invasion of their rights by strangers, which circumstances rendered necessary.

We might add a third corollary from a careful digest of contemporary writings and the sworn depositions of English-speaking and non-Catholic personages then living in Assiniboia. Had it not been for the action of their clergy, who "were friendly to the Canadian Government," the English portion of the population "might have joined the French, and might have led to an easier solution of the diffi-

culty."[29] This is so true that when superhuman efforts were made to cause them to rise against their compatriots; when Colonel Dennis commenced trying to arm the people in opposition to the French, took "possession of Lower Fort Garry, enlisted a number of Indians with their chief," he "failed in getting the old settlers to join him, and left in disgust."[30]

This sworn assertion of Bannatyne's (which is but a concise presentation of what is now an incontested historical fact) is further strengthened, were this necessary, by the letter which two representative English halfbreeds published in denial of statements contained in the same Colonel Dennis' report to his master, Mr. Wm. McDougall. Nothing could better express the profound distrust entertained for the strangers from Ontario by the entire population of Assiniboia, and implicitly show how both English and French were a unit in the question of obtaining their rights by peaceful means. Here is the document in its entirety:

"We beg, through the medium of your journal [the *New Nation*] to declare to the public, in the most emphatic terms, that this assertion of our having counselled an appeal to arms is a downright falsehood. If Col. Dennis has the smallest particle of sound brains, he must remember that we, on the contrary, pressed upon him, in the clearest and most

[29] "Preliminary Investigation," deposition of Thomas Bunn, ex-Secretary of the Council of Assiniboia, p. 116.

[30] A. G. B. Bannatyne in same, p. 124.

express words, to abandon the idea of an appeal to arms, advising him moreover, that a resort to arms would be nothing but madness, and insisting upon his leaving the Settlement forthwith and remaining quiet. Though always inclined to give hospitality to strangers, and though we had already done so to Col. Dennis, under other circumstances, we feel ourselves bound at this juncture to refuse him hospitality, knowing his hare-brained design. We halfbreeds feel it very keenly that strangers, after having endeavoured to bring ruin on our country, should try to blacken our character before the public by attributing to us acts and intentions of which they themselves alone are guilty.''[31]

Having thus cleared the way of all possible misapprehensions as to the real character of the Red River insurrection of 1869, we will now proceed to give a short résumé of the principal phases of the same, and state candidly the part the Catholic Church took in the measures intended as a protest against the encroachments of Ottawa and as a bid for negotiations therewith, remarking, by way of preface, that Bishop Taché, as well as Bishop Clut, had left for the Œcumenical Council of the Vatican in the course of 1869, after the former had confided to Father Lestanc the care of his diocese.

[31]Begg, ''The Creation of Manitoba,'' p. 141. This volume, by a writer who was intimately connected with the events he narrates, is so full of damaging statements concerning the part played by the representatives of Canada, that it is now exceedingly rare, as a result, it is plainly hinted, of a campaign of suppression by the friends of those who are exposed therein.

CHAPTER XXIII.

BEGINNING OF THE RED RIVER INSURRECTION.

1869-1870.

A writer who has become famous for the lightness of heart with which he makes unwarranted assertions against the good name of honourable parties whose views differ from his, and advances in explanation of facts he cannot understand surmises based on his own prejudices; a man who is chiefly remarkable for the imperturbable serenity with which he contemplates the affidavits and sworn depositions of eye-witnesses in rebuttal of statements which he nevertheless continues to consider as the expression of truth; that man gives as one of the chief causes of the 1869 outbreak "a dangerous religious element in the country—ecclesiastics from old France —who had no love for Britain, no love for Canada, no love for any country, no love for society, no love for peace."

After this hysterical outburst, he is so exercised at the thought of the deleterious influence of those men, that he sees priests in persons who were not even in minor orders, and adds: "These plotters were in close association with the halfbreeds, dic-

tated their policy and freely mingled with the rebels.'"[1]

Had we not already devoted so much space to the causes and real nature of the outbreak, we might tarry in a refutation of those charges, which nobody but such as are unfamiliar with the personality of their author will take seriously. Moreover, as this work is one of history, not of polemics, before letting the events speak for themselves—events which we shall relate not after the luminous exposition of the same given on oath by Bishop Taché, but, as is our wont, after official documents and Protestant testimony—we shall content ourselves with remarking that, of the three French priests at St. Boniface during the troubles, Fathers Lestanc, Maisonneuve and Tissot, only the first named had anything to do with the population, while the two other ecclesiastics, Messrs. Dugas and Giroux, were Canadians and

[1] "History of the Hudson's Bay Company," by George Bryce, pp. 460, 461. The foregoing was written before that author's last popular work on the Settlement of Lord Selkirk's Colonists appeared. It is only fair to remark that, while in one paragraph of that book Dr. Bryce still insinuates the same unwarranted charges, he is now careful to abstain from any definite statement impeaching the representatives of the Church. He even manages to write calmly of Riel and his supporters, though he continues to call them rebels, regarding as "loyal" the few French halfbreeds who did not side with him. Loyal to whom? Loyal to what? To the British Crown? But Riel was more so than anybody, since he rejected very tempting offers to throw off the British "yoke," a meritorious act the like of which cannot be put to the credit of any of his opponents. Loyal to the Government of Assiniboia? But this had abdicated all power through its representative, who advised the Red River settlers to speedily form some Government, while the Hudson's Bay Company had no more any charter right to the country. Loyal to Canada? But Canada had as yet no right to Assiniboia, as is conceded by everybody. Verily, there are historical blunders, represented by foundationless catchwords, that die hard.

strongly pro-British in their sentiments. We leave it to any unprejudiced reader to decide upon the epithet which should characterize the description of kindly and scrupulous Père Lestanc unblushingly given by the Winnipeg author. "No love for any country, no love for society, no love for peace"; this could scarcely be said of an anarchist!

We may say that Father Lestanc was never a *persona grata* with Riel, and on that account he preferred sending Mr. Giroux to act as chaplain to the halfbreed garrison at Fort Garry.[2]

The French population had been for some time listening to the threats of the Ontarians, and sullenly witnessing their surveyors running their lines across their lands. They said little, but thought a good deal, unbosoming themselves of their suppressed feelings in private talks and secret meetings, when they came to the conclusion that things had gone far enough, and a stop must be put to the impudence of the strangers. Consequently, on October 11, 1869, Louis Riel, with seventeen unarmed sympathizers, prevented a Mr. Webb from proceeding with his survey by stepping on his chain and ordering him away.

This having been reported to Webb's superior, Col. Dennis, the matter was laid before Dr. William

[2] "Riel never consulted me, neither before nor after his deeds. For my part, I seldom went to Fort Garry. I do not remember having had an interview with Riel alone, save on the day of Scott's execution, about half an hour before the execution" (Fr. Lestanc in letter to Mgr. Langevin, 18th Feb., 1909).

Cowan, a justice of the peace at Fort Garry, who summoned Riel to appear before himself and a brother magistrate, Roger Goulet. But the half-breed declared in no uncertain terms that "the Canadian Government had no right to make surveys in the territory without the express permission of the people in the Settlement,"[3] and refused to allow said surveys to be resumed. They then took him before Governor McTavish, with a like result, and, as a last resort, Dr. Cowan approached the administrator of the diocese, Father Lestanc, requesting him to use his influence towards bringing about the cessation of Riel's obstruction. But the priest declined to interfere, because, he said, he "had heard too much concerning the surveyors, who treated the halfbreeds like dogs, did not respect their rights, destroyed their property and threatened them."[4] He declared that his intention was to remain absolutely neutral, instead of compromising by an ill-advised intervention the influence of the clergy which might prove useful under different circumstances. "Let the Canadian Government convince them that their rights shall not be interfered

[3]Blue Book of 1869-70, p. 6.

[4]From a public lecture given at Calgary by Father Lestanc, March 4, 1909. In a previous interview with Col. Dennis himself, who had called on that "plotter priest, the dastard Lestanc," as Bryce elegantly styles him, the humble priest had readily consented to do the colonel's bidding. Then the extreme imprudence of opposing the public feeling, after such unwarranted provocations, was pointed out to him, and this led him to the conclusion that he should not interfere in any way. (See Dugas, *Le Mouvement des Métis,* pp. 49-52).

with,'' he added, ''and the Métis will of themselves go for Mr. McDougall and triumphantly bring him here.''[5]

On the other hand, as it was noised abroad that said would-be governor, Wm. McDougall, was nearing the American frontier, preceded on the way by cases of rifles and ammunition for his partizans, Riel, with two scores of men, erected a barrier on the highway from Pembina, near the spot where stands to-day the Sale River bridge, in the parish of St. Norbert, which he caused to be guarded by a force of armed halfbreeds.

Then, in conformity with the immemorial custom of the country in cases of national importance, a committee was formed to deliberate on the situation, with a John Bruce as president and Louis Riel as secretary. This measure was considered all the more necessary as, in addition to the well-founded rumour that arms were being introduced in the colony for no other purpose than that of attacking the malcontents, it was now declared by a spy of Schultz (a Walton Hyman, whose name the Blue Book intentionally suppresses) that many of the Easterners in Assiniboia were soldiers in disguise, who had secreted their uniforms in their new homes.

This intelligence resulted in Mr. McDougall being forbidden (October 21st) to enter the territory without the authorization of the ''National Commit-

[5]From the unpublished memoirs of Rev. Mr. Giroux, who was present at the interview.

tee of the Red River Halfbreeds." Whereupon Col. Dennis made a tour of the English in the Settlement, in the hope of causing them to rise in behalf of the contemplated order of things; but "he found that fifty men could not be collected for the purpose of bringing in Governor McDougall."[6] Therefore the lawful governor, Mr. Wm. McTavish, wrote McDougall (October 30th), in the name of himself and council, that he "should remain at Pembina, and await the issue of conciliatory negotiations."[7]

Yet McDougall's agent, Col. Dennis, dispatched a portion of his men to Portage la Prairie, then a hotbed of plotters against the French population, and where but a short time before an attempt had been made at creating a commonwealth independent from the jurisdiction of Assiniboia. Dennis' object was to have those men in readiness for an emergency which was expected in the near future.

As McDougall could not proceed to Fort Garry, he sent thither his secretary, J. A. N. Provencher, a nephew of the first Bishop of St. Boniface. But that gentleman was stopped at St. Norbert and escorted back to Pembina, just as another of McDougall's friends, a doughty Capt. Cameron, was undergoing a similar check at the barrier in spite of his imperious command that the guards put down "that blawsted fence" (November 1st). Then, to prevent the forces which were known to be recruited

[6]Begg, "The Creation of Manitoba," p. 37.
[7]*Ibid.*, p. 41.

by the Canadian party from availing themselves of the strong walls and cannon of Fort Garry, thereby blasting all hopes of redress, Riel occupied it (November 2nd) with some sixty men, whose numbers were afterwards increased as occasion required.[8]

Three days later friends of McDougall in Winnipeg sent him a communication which is full of significance as regards the aims of the movement. They wrote: "The Hudson's Bay Company . . . are evidently with the rebels, and their present rôle is to prevent your having any official intercourse with them. It is said that the rebels will support the government of the Hudson's Bay Company as it now exists. All the subordinates in the party say that if you have a commission from Her Majesty to enter here as governor, they will lay down their arms."[9] A rather novel kind of "rebels," we should say, that profess loyalty to the existing authority (momentarily crippled by unforeseen circumstances), and are even ready to lay down their arms on the production of an authentic commission from the Sovereign, in spite of the grave reasons they have to apprehend that the powers thereby conferred will be abused! Who wrote that the English nation glories in its illogical turn of mind? . . .

Meanwhile, the movement of protestation against Ottawa had the full sympathy of Mr. Ritchot, of St.

[8]As early as 1st Nov., 1869, "the muster-roll was answered by 402 men, all bearing arms; and, while Mr. Provencher was present, about 100 more came to camp and took the oath" (Blue Book, p. 27).

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 22.

Norbert, while Father Lestanc remained neutral, refusing to interfere one way or another,[10] and limiting his action to a plea for unity in any measure that might be taken, as nothing but most regrettable results could be achieved by disunion.[11]

This was evidently Riel's own opinion, who immediately issued a proclamation inviting the English and French sections of the colony to elect each a deputation of twelve members, who were to meet in a convention and deliberate on what was to be done. Despite the efforts of the Canadian party to have this proclamation ignored by the English-speaking people, all the electoral divisions created for the purpose sent in delegates who met on November 16, 1869.

But, owing to a diversity of interests, but especially to a proclamation against the whole movement which McDougall had importuned the sick Governor of Assiniboia into launching forth that very day, against his own better judgment and the advice of

[10]Col. Dennis himself admitted to his chief that in the course of a meeting between insurgent and non-insurgent French halfbreeds (that is, on the occasion *par excellence* when he should have raised his voice on behalf of the former, had he been a partisan), the priest "took little or no part in the proceedings one way or another" (Blue Book, p. 8).

[11]Messrs. Ritchot, Dugas and Giroux were Canadians and secular priests, while Father Lestanc was an Oblate. Yet, with the lack of accuracy too common among Protestant authors treating of Catholic subjects, Lord Wolseley sees in them all "Jesuit missionaries from France," who, he seriously declares, were in 1870 the *de facto* rulers of the country, though their actual following was smaller than that of the various Protestant sects, a fact entirely disproved by the census that was taken almost immediately after his expedition to Red River ("The Red River Expedition," p. 200).

LOUIS RIEL

After an Authentic Photograph

Judge Black,[12] little more was accomplished by that convention than the drafting of a Bill of Rights to be sent to the Federal authorities.

That the author of, and associates in, the movement were worthy of the public sympathies, is attested by many non-Catholic English writers, whose testimony finds a place among the official records of the time. Thus Governor McTavish admits, under date November 16, 1869, that "the men generally are quiet and orderly, and evidently unwilling to give offence," though he is of opinion that "Riel himself is not inclined to be so civil."[13] The correspondent of an American paper, who seems careful not to side with any of the contending parties, writes that "they scrupulously respect property, and have forcibly stopped the sale of liquor both in the fort and at the village of Winnipeg."[14] Another has it that "they take an oath to abstain from intoxicating liquors until they have this matter settled, and, so far, have strictly abided by it. They have allowed large quantities of liquors to pass through their camp [at St. Norbert] on their way here [Fort Garry] without touching any of it. In some cases they have opened boxes to search for

[12]The foremost layman in the whole colony. Begg expressly states in his later work, "History of the North-West," vol. I., p. 396, that "had no proclamation been presented to disturb the deliberations of the assembly, there is no saying how much good might have resulted from the convention."

[13]Blue Book, p. 185.

[14]*Ibid.*, p. 26.

rifles, but if they were not found, they do not touch the contents.''[15]

In this temperance pledge, at least, most readers will recognize the much deplored intervention of the clergy. The same correspondent notes the loyal sentiments of the French halfbreeds, saying: ''They are anxious that it should be clearly understood that their actions have been solely directed against the Canadian, and not at all the Imperial, Government.''

Nor was the abstemiousness of the insurgents confined to Fort Garry or St. Norbert; for a correspondent writing from Pembina expressly states that ''no soldier is permitted to take a drop of spirits. The most stringent discipline is observed. If a citizen or outsider is found drunk or disorderly, he is promptly arrested and confined until sober and quiet.''[16]

Were this necessary, we might further quote another writer who states that ''the discipline hitherto maintained has been quite wonderful. There has been no drinking, and the men are civil to all strangers who meet them. The Government, so far, is generally acknowledged to be an improvement upon that of the Company.''[17]

These quotations we adduce, not as proofs of impeccability on the part of the insurgents, but to show, by the testimony of English-speaking Protes-

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 27.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 27.

tants on the spot, whether they were a lawless rabble,[18] as has been contended by would-be historians, and at the same time to illustrate the ideals they had in mind when they first rose.[19] If later on they somewhat relaxed from these exemplary dispositions, and if their chief had at times to show himself autocratic, it came mostly from the opposition and machinations of their enemies and the danger in which many of the English and some of the French occasionally were of becoming their tools. In the case of Riel, the few unnecessary acts of oppression at his hands might furthermore be credited to his youth and a certain excitable disposition which contrasted disagreeably, when opposed, with his usual courtesy and gentlemanly manners.

He constantly endeavoured to bring about the union of the two races in a common protestation and secure the unanimous adoption of a Bill of Rights to be submitted to the Ottawa Government as a condition for their entering Confederation. But, faithful to the old motto: divide that thou mayest rule, Mc-

[18]Lord Wolseley publicly called them *banditti*.

[19]To give an example of the *despotic* (?) ways of "the wretched man, Louis Riel" (Wolseley, "The Red River Expedition," p. 219), we herewith reproduce a note he sent, 27th Dec., 1869, to the saloon keepers in and around Winnipeg, at a time when disorders due to drink are but too common and when an invasion of the Sioux was feared:

"Sir:

"I do hereby respectfully pray you to let nobody have any liquor at your place from this date up to the tenth of January next. In so doing you will grant the country a great favour, and very likely preserve it from great misfortune.

"Yours very respectfully,

"LOUIS RIEL."

Dougall, who was but imperfectly informed as to the real state of affairs, as unceasingly strove to excite one section of the population against the other. Canada refused to accept the country as long as it remained disaffected.[20] Hence the transfer of the same to the Dominion was postponed until some sort of arrangement could be concluded with the Assiniboians.[21]

This did not prevent McDougall from publishing, as much as he could under the circumstances (December 1st), a proclamation whereby the Queen was supposed to appoint him Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest Territories. On the following day, he introduced himself as such in a second document of identical nature to all of Her Majesty's officials in said territories.

He did more. On the sixth of the same month, he issued still another proclamation, this time to Col. John Stoughton Dennis, whom he appointed his

[20]Lord Wolseley is misleading when he asserts that "the Governor appointed by the Hudson's Bay Company was to exercise authority until Mr. McDougall reached Fort Garry" (*op. cit.*, p. 217), thereby implying that McDougall was to have been vested with authority immediately after his arrival, whether the country had been transferred or not to Canada.

[21]In consequence, McDougall was duly notified (19th Nov., 1869) that he could "claim or assert no authority in the Hudson's Bay Territory until the Queen's Proclamation, annexing the country to Canada," reached him. Apart from this, McDougall knew so well that he needed official notification before he could act as governor that, on the 7th of November, he had written to McTavish: "I shall remain here [Pembina] until I hear officially of the transfer of authority," and on the 14th of the same month he had thus addressed the Secretary of State, at Ottawa: "Until the transfer of the Territory has taken place, *and I am notified of the fact,* I shall not assume any of the responsibilities of government" (Blue Book, p. 83).

"Lieutenant and Conservator of the peace," with power to "raise, organize, arm, equip and provision a sufficient force . . . to assault, fire upon, pull down, or break into any fort, house, stronghold or other place" in which those who refused to be delivered up unconditionally to the tender mercies of Ottawa's minions might be found. A rather novel sort of conservator of the peace, indeed, whose very first duty is to bring civil war on a country to which he has not the shadow of a right!

So far, as we have seen from Protestant testimony, the halfbreeds had recognized the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company, while judging that, in the course of the exceptional circumstances their country was traversing, the moribund state of its rule demanded a special intervention on their part. When shown a copy of McDougall's proclamation, the Governor of Assiniboia declared his own authority at an end. But Riel and his friends had their doubts concerning the genuineness of that document. They waited a little, and, when satisfied of its worthlessness, they published themselves a proclamation wherein, "after having invoked the God of nations," they declared themselves exempt from all allegiance "to the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, which had betrayed their interests" and but lately abdicated its powers through the declaration of its head (December 8, 1869). At the same time, they added that they held themselves "in readiness to enter into such negotiations with the Canadian Gov-

ernment as may be favourable for the good government and prosperity of this people.''[22]

Thenceforth they acted on the principles of their declaration, believing that all lawful authority but their own had momentarily disappeared from Red River: that assumed by McDougall was premature and void, and that of the old Government of Assiniboia had just been given up by Mr. McTavish.

Two days later they solemnly hoisted a flag bearing the French fleur-de-lis with the Irish shamrock, a step which was to become the occasion of much obloquy and which they might have omitted with advantage to their cause, since, with one single exception, their devotion to British interests was well known. Yet, even on this occasion, they were but following the example of those who afterwards raised such an outcry against that incident. The British flag was not known in Red River; the flag of the Hudson's Bay Company had, to a late date, been that of the country, and the Canadian party had for several years, hoisted in opposition thereto a flag of their own make, that is, the Union Jack, with the partizan word ''CANADA'' in large letters.

As already hinted, most of Riel's apparently aggressive measures were really but acts of self-defence. For instance, his definitive assertion of power had been hastened by the stand the Canadian party had recently taken at his very door. Under date November 29th, McDougall had written that

[22]Blue Book, p. 75.

he had taken measures to "organize an armed force to seize Riel and his colleagues, and disperse the rank and file of his followers."[23] His astounding provocation to civil war of December 6th, was but another step in the same programme. While Dennis was busy agitating among the English, a number of Canadians and sympathizers had gathered in Dr. Schultz's house, where barrels of flour and pork sent from Ottawa for the labourers on the Dawson road were stored. As these provisions were being gradually removed, apparently with a view to their being used by McDougall's possible recruits and thus contributing towards civil war, Riel demanded their surrender. This was refused, and the Canadians openly defied him. Therefore, on December 7th, he forcibly took them and made prisoners the leaders of the malcontents to the number of forty-five.

Riel had so far kept himself in the background. On Christmas Day, 1869, he ostensibly assumed the title of President of the Provisional Government, with Louis Schmidt (a halfbreed who enjoyed a college education) as secretary.

That same day intelligence was received that two gentlemen sent by Ottawa had arrived at Pembina. They were Vicar-General Thibault, who had now passed eighteen months in the east, and Col. Charles de Salaberry, son of the hero of Châteauguay. Neither had any power to treat officially with the Provisional Government; they had simply been

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 55.

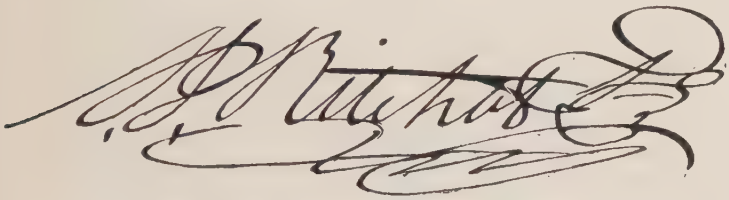
deputed to use their influence to persuade the Métis to disarm. Their mission was therefore doomed to failure.

Two days later, another commissioner, Mr. Donald A. Smith (to-day Lord Strathcona), came from the same quarters with an identical mission, but armed with papers whose production occasioned a mass meeting of the people, January 19 and 20, 1870. This was at best a most dangerous venture, on which Mr. Smith insisted. The convening of so conflicting elements in the presence of a party who, however honourable he might be, was none the less hostile to the movement of protestation, was tantamount to bringing fire and powder together. Hence the noisiness of the proceedings that ensued when, in spite of a temperature 20° below zero, fully a thousand attended the meeting, among whom were all the notabilities of the country, lay and clerical, of both Catholic and Protestant persuasions.

The Blue Book again testifies to the fact that Father Lestanc used his influence merely in the interests of peace and mutual amity between the two sections of the people, which some motions had had for object to estrange. At the conclusion "cheers were given for Father Lestanc, Bishop Machray,[24] Father Ritchot, Mr. Riel, Mr. O'Donoghue and the commissioners. . . . Father Ritchot said that he was glad to be present with the Bishop of Rupert's Land and the clergy of various denominations. All, he

[24]The Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land.

believed, came there with the best interests of the people at heart. They came there to see that order and good feeling prevailed, and to influence the people as far as they could in the direction of what was right and just. The clergy were also citizens, and as such they were glad to be present and promote those objects.''[25]



REV. MR. RITCHOT'S SIGNATURE.

We purposely quote this reference to Mr. Ritchot's speech from the official Blue Book,[26] because his words, such as recalled, give perfectly the scope and extent of his intervention throughout the whole troubles.

[25]Blue Book, p. 103.

[26]Which was published at London, England, in the course of 1870.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT.

1870.

The practical outcome of the meeting held at the instance of Commissioner Smith was the decision to have a new convention, at which twenty delegates of the English part of the colony should meet an equal number of French representatives to consider his commission and "decide what would be best for the welfare of the country."[1] This assembly was convoked with the approval of Ottawa's accredited agent, who "went around to induce the people to elect representatives to the Council of February."[2] This first met on January 25, 1870, and, as it "was composed of men of good standing in the community, especially the English members,"[3] it resulted in real advantage to the cause of peace and harmony.

For the first time, the English population concurred in the formation of a Provisional Government, after their delegates had satisfied themselves of Governor McTavish's abdication. To this effect, Mr. (afterwards Senator) John Sutherland, went to interview him on his sick bed with Messrs. John

[1]Blue Book, p. 104.

[2]Thos. Bunn's sworn testimony, "Report of Select Committee," p. 118.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 121.

Fraser, Xavier Pagé and Ambrose D. Lépine. The first named thus relates the incident in a deposition under oath: "Our question was in this sense: Was Governor McTavish still governor of this country,[4] and would he continue it? The answer was: 'Form some government for God's sake; I have no power or authority.' "[5] These words being reported to the convention, did away with any scruples the English members might still have entertained.

As a consequence, the convention elected, with only one dissentient voice, Louis Riel, "President of the Provisional Government of Rupert's Land"; while Thomas Bunn was named Secretary; O'Donoghue, Treasurer; James Ross, Chief Justice; A. G. B. Bannatyne, Postmaster-General, and Ambrose D. Lépine, Adjutant-General, or Chief of the Militia.

Any impartial reader will now realize that, by the end of February, 1870, first, there was at Red River no other government, lawful or unlawful, than that presided over by Louis Riel; second, this had been formed by the free representatives of all classes of the people, with the approval of Ottawa's Special Commissioner Smith, and at the bidding of the ex-Governor of Assiniboia; third, this government was the only one possible under the circumstances, since even Wm. McDougall afterwards admitted in the Canadian Parliament that "it was absurd to say that

[4]He remained, of course, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company in America.

[5]"Preliminary Investigation and Trial of A. D. Lépine," p. 80.

the Hudson's Bay Company should have maintained order, as they were in a moribund state of existence.''[6]

We might add that its delegates or special envoys were afterwards officially recognized by the Federal authorities, and that Riel was himself directed by Sir George Cartier to continue in the exercise of his presidential functions until the arrival of the new governor to be named by Ottawa.[7]

That government, therefore, enjoyed all the necessary guarantees of legitimacy possible under the circumstances, and must have been vested with sufficient authority to provide effectively for its own preservation, and make itself respected by the few malcontents who should attempt to overthrow it. Hence, all such as affect to call it the ''so-called Provisional Government,'' and term its head the ''would-be President,'' thereby simply betray their own ignorance or bad faith. In view of what was to happen, these are facts that should not be lost sight of.

The same convention, in union with the new gov-

[6]Blue Book, p. 146. We might add, as a fourth conclusion, that, since Riel's government was composed of four English, as against two French, members, it is sovereignly unjust to represent the movement as a purely French one.

[7]''I then asked Sir George who was to govern the country pending the arrival of the Lieutenant-Governor, and if he was to name somebody to do so. He answered, 'No, let Mr. Riel continue to maintain order and govern the country as he has done up to the present moment.' He asked me if I thought that Riel was sufficiently powerful to maintain order. I said I thought he was. Then he answered, 'Let him continue till the Governor comes,' '' (Ritchot's testimony in ''Report of the Select Committee,'' p. 77).

ernment now recognized by all the Assiniboians, prepared a more explicit Bill of Rights to be submitted to Ottawa, and appointed three delegates to proceed thither and negotiate its acceptance by the Federal authorities. These were Rev. Mr. Ritchot, Judge Black and Mr. Alfred Scott.

Highly gratified at the union of the races and interests for which he had persistently laboured, and no less pleased at his own confirmation in the presidency, Riel now liberated sixteen of his prisoners and promised to set the others free in the near future. Just then, however, intelligence was received that a band of Canadian malcontents, led by Major C. W. Boulton, had reached Headingly in their march from Portage la Prairie to the English part of the Settlement, where they expected to be joined by great numbers, whom they intended to incite against the very government they had just formed through their representatives. Their plan was then to attack Fort Garry, and overthrow Riel. Schultz, who had previously escaped with Thomas Scott, a bad character, William Gaddee, a spy, and two others, had taken possession of the Stone Fort, on the lower Red River, and, by dint of misrepresentations and coaxing, had succeeded in raising a large force with the same object in view.

All the good achieved by the convention was thereby reduced to naught.

Early in the morning of February 15th, the Portage party, equipped with ladders to scale the walls

of Fort Garry, passed in sight of Riel, who with difficulty kept his men from breaking out and attacking them. Father Lestanc had repeatedly added to his exhortations to union a strong plea against the shedding of blood, and though no friend of Riel's, his words had nevertheless made an impression on the president.

The Canadian rebels against the sole authority of the land repaired to a house which Riel was known to frequent, and Thomas Scott made himself conspicuous by his eagerness in searching for him at the very time when the president was "urging his influence to restrain the French from attacking their party."[8]

After their junction with Schultz's recruits in the lower settlement, the rebels numbered between six and seven hundred, among whom we regret to have to count a number of Indians.[9] About five hundred French were stationed within Fort Garry. Fearing lest the Catholic establishments at St. Boniface should be made to serve as a base of operation against the fort, Riel had the Bishop's Palace occupied by some of his own soldiers.

As Begg remarks, this "movement did not originate with the settlers themselves; but, being urged by a few firebrands to rush without forethought into an undertaking which was likely to destroy at one sweep their labours of years in the Settlement, they

[8]Begg, "The Creation of Manitoba," p. 279.
[9]*Ibid.*, p. 287.

forgot their homes, their families and their better judgment to plunge prematurely into a civil war.''[10]

Things were now reaching a climax. But a Miss McVicar boldly interposed herself, and impressed upon Riel the necessity of releasing the twenty-four remaining prisoners, since the English insurgents had made their liberation a pretext for their rising. Riel remarked that he had long wanted to give them their liberty, but they had refused to sign an agreement not to rise any longer against the Provisional Government. Being at length persuaded to subscribe to that document, they were set free and the English insurgents notified of the fact. In answer to that conciliatory measure, the latter wrote the president that they would not recognize his government, but attempt to overthrow it. Whereupon Riel took every means of strengthening his position and weakening that of his adversaries, writing them at the same time a characteristic letter wherein he said:

''We are ready to meet any party; but peace, our British rights, we want before all. Gentlemen, the prisoners are out—they have sworn to keep the peace. We have taken the responsibility of our past acts. Mr. William McTavish has asked you, for the sake of God, to form and complete the Provisional Government. Your representatives have joined us on that ground. Who will now come and destroy the Red River Settlement?''[11]

[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 280, 281.

[11] Begg, ''The Creation of Manitoba,'' p. 287.

This did not prevent the English from going on with their bellicose preparations.[12] But, being without organization or commissariat and the news of Riel's determined stand leaking out among them, they soon after returned to their homes. In the morning of the 17th a party of Portagers passed in sight of Fort Garry. After the terrible anxieties and the sleepless watches of the last two days and nights, Riel could no longer restrain his men. They sallied out after those whom they knew to be the cause of the whole trouble, and captured them all, to the number of forty-eight, among whom were Major Boulton and Thomas Scott. In the words of Alex. Begg, "this ended this mad-like expedition from Portage."[13]

[12]It were perfectly impracticable to attempt a refutation of all the misstatements published on that troubled period. But since we have admitted that Dr. Bryce was more truthful in his last book than in his previous productions, we may as well single out this particular for a demonstration of the way facts may be given a complexion which renders them unrecognizable. Dr. Bryce would have us believe that, "alarmed at the movement [of the Portage men], Riel released all the prisoners in the fort. Their object being gained, the men of the Kildonan Church camp, who had grown to be six hundred strong, dissolved" ("The Romantic Settlement of Lord Selkirk's Colonists," p. 297). The truth is, according to Begg, who was on the spot, that even after Riel's manly letter, "the English party continued to go on with their preparations to attack Fort Garry. They levied provisions from the neighboring houses, and endeavored to form some sort of order amongst the people collected around the church" ("The Creation of Manitoba," p. 289).

We might also add that, despite Bryce's assertion that Riel then arrested "by an unheard of act of treachery" such of those misguided men as were seen passing by Fort Garry on their way home, the President of the Provisional Government had nothing to do with the affair. It was O'Donoghue who lead the party which intercepted them, and they were clearly given to understand that they were made prisoners.

[13]*Ibid.*, p. 290.

Exasperated by this ever-recurring hostility and lack of good faith after the recognition of his government, Riel thought no peace could be secured until the ringleaders of the chronic risings were convinced of the authorities' determination to defend themselves at all costs against their perennial intrigues. Boulton was therefore condemned to death on the charge of treason.[14] Yet, owing to the intercession of influential parties, among whom was Father Lestanc, his life was spared,[15] and Donald A. Smith undertook to pacify the malcontents, so that he might, by effecting their return to union, obtain the release of all the prisoners.

But among the latter there was one who, by his abusive language and violent actions, proved to be

[14]William Gaddee had already met with a similar fate, which was intended to awe the malcontents into submission rather than punish a rebel, as was proved by the way in which the sentence was executed. Riel went to Gaddee with a guard of six men, and made the condemned man kneel before his executioners, who had already cocked their guns. Then the President went out to him, and, touching him on the shoulder, addressed him thus: "Get up, Gaddee; we don't mean to harm you. But remember that you must consider yourself as dead. You will stay here a few days more, and then we will secretly make you pass into the United States." Instead of following these directions, the foolish man escaped under circumstances of particular discomfort, and showed his gratitude by starting ridiculously false stories about a priest administering holy communion (? !) on the spot of his would-be execution to make men shoot him who shrank from the task. Such is the gullibility of some non-Catholics that they cannot see the unparalleled absurdity of such a statement, but publish it as undoubted truth. (See Hill's "History of Manitoba," p. 299).

[15]"Mr. Boulton came to the bishop's house to thank me for the favour I had obtained. He said: 'I owe you my life; how can I thank you?' He was so grateful that he touched my heart, and he promised never to forget the favour obtained at our hands." (From a lecture delivered by Father Lestanc at Calgary, 4th March, 1909, and reproduced by the press of the West).

a thorn in the side of the president. This was Thomas Scott, who had inaugurated his career in the Middle West by attempting to drown the superintendent of the Dawson road, because that gentleman refused to pay him for the three days during which he had remained idle as a protest against the food given him.[16] Arrested several times for inciting to rebellion against the Provisional Government, he had either been released on parole or escaped from his place of confinement. Latterly, he had become unmanageable, striking his guards with his chains, breaking open the doors of his prison and assaulting the president himself.

Out of patience at his insolence and aggressiveness, his guards had one day retaliated by dragging him out, and were about to sacrifice him when one of the French councillors rescued him from their hands. On March 1st Riel was told of the prisoner's conduct, and warned that several of his fellows, encouraged by the impunity with which his antics were treated, now shared his insubordination. The guards assured him that, unless an example was made, it would soon be impossible to keep any prisoner.

The president endeavoured to calm them. Then he entreated Scott to be peaceful and act as a reasonable man, under pain of having soon to face a terrible fate, as plain hints were beginning to be made that, if his outrages remained unpunished, Riel

[16]He would probably have succeeded in his evil designs but for the intervention of a French-Canadian named Olivier Ducharme.

himself would have to answer for them. Whereupon Scott only sneered at his interlocutor and insulted him. Having that very day renewed his acts of violence, the guards, now thoroughly incensed, clamoured for a court-martial, and broke out into unveiled threats at Riel if this was not granted.

Two days more did the latter manage to temporize. Then he thought that the interests of peace among the malcontents, if not his own personal safety, demanded that Scott be made an example of. He was therefore summoned before the council of war, composed of seven,[17] and almost unanimously condemned to death.

When it became known that this time there was surely to be an execution, several persons, among whom were Donald A. Smith and Father Lestanc, begged Riel to pardon the doomed man. But Riel had been too often trifled with: the ruthless spirits in the colony, who smarted under their recent discomfiture and probably meditated new risings, would not take his government seriously unless they were shown that it could defend itself by exercising the powers of life and death inherent to all governments, especially in times such as the Red River Settlement was then traversing. Moreover, the example of the unruly prisoner "had been productive of the very worst effects on the other prisoners, who had become insubordinate to such an extent that it was difficult

[17] In which Riel took no part.

to withhold the guards from retaliating.'"[18] As to Father Lestanc's intervention, the halfbreed leader who, according to Major Boulton, had risen to power by using the priests to further his designs, "would brook little interference on their part," especially when this came from one with whom he had never been on friendly terms.[19]

Accordingly, Scott was shot outside of the fort walls at noon of the 4th of March.[20] Hearing of this the ringleaders of the periodical risings decamped of themselves, and "after this the Provisional Government went on peacefully until the arrival of Colonel Wolseley." This remark is by Mr. Bannatyne, of whom even Robert Hill writes that "there is no name received with more respect throughout the great Northwest than that of Hon. A. G. B. Bannatyne."[21]

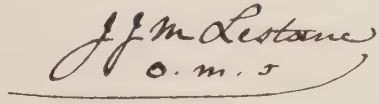
[18] "Smith's Report," in Begg's "History of the North-West," vol. I., pp. 507, 508.

[19] Boulton, "Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellions," pp. 136, 137. Toronto, 1886.

[20] Will any one learn why, in the opinion of Lord Wolseley, Thomas Scott, the whilom would-be murderer of his own employer, was singled out for execution? "Because he had been most loud-spoken in his expressions of loyalty to the Queen" ("The Red River Expedition," p. 219)! A companion in arms, Capt. G. L. Huyshe, is no less positive. Scott's *only crime*, he declares, "had been loyalty to his Queen and devotion to his country" ("The Red River Expedition," p. 20. London, 1871)!! Nor is this all. Every student of Manitoban history knows that the poor man was court-martialled on the 3rd of March, and executed on the morrow, attended by his chaplain. But Capt. Huyshe is positive that "with inhuman cruelty his execution was ordered to take place at noon *the same day* (*op. cit.*). Yet even this pales before Wolseley's assertion that Scott's executioners "were at the same time addressed by a French priest on the ground where it (the murder) was committed, and told they were about to perform a righteous act" (*op. cit.*, p. 220). Such is the way history is written when entrusted to soldiers!

[21] Hill, "History of Manitoba," pp. 755, 756.

We might pass without comment on an event which, according to a Protestant correspondent of the oldest paper in Winnipeg, "has received attention altogether out of proportion to its importance";[22] but prejudiced writers and press hirelings have made it a text for too many calumnies against the Catholic Church to leave us free to pursue such a course. We are all the more able to remark dispassionately on the same as, in our opinion, the regularity of Scott's execution, regrettable as it may be, plainly flows from the legitimacy of the authority under which it was consummated. So that, had it taken place with the approval of the Church, as has been claimed, or even at her bidding, as a few have not been ashamed to write, we do not think that such an action would call for any attempt at palliation on our part. For all impartial and unprejudiced minds, the question must be, not one of lawfulness, but of opportuneness.



FATHER LESTANC'S SIGNATURE.

Father Lestanc has been blamed for abetting that execution by people who base their surmises on the able, and apparently impartial, report of Special Commissioner Smith. But if any fair-minded lover

[22] "The Free Press," 10th April, 1909.

of history will closely study that document, he will not be long in discovering under its polished sentences unmistakable signs of two uncontrollable aversions, probably not realized by the writer who framed it, but none the less potent factors in his appreciation of persons and facts. The object of the first was Riel himself, and Smith would not have been human had it been otherwise. An honoured representative of the Hudson's Bay Company in Montreal, he was confronted at Red River by an immense establishment belonging to that body, but now in the hands of people among whom he had not been when they were provoked into taking possession of it. He saw there a young, dashing and somewhat autocratic halfbreed controlling men and things that were not his: evidently no good Company man could be a witness to such a reversal of the normal rôles without harbouring for the author of the anomaly sentiments not the most friendly.

In this nobody can blame Mr. Smith. But it was precisely on account of that gentleman's connection with the great Company that, with his undiplomatic brusqueness, Father Lestanc deemed it his duty to tell him point blank: "I am sorry that you have been sent to advise the halfbreeds here. You are not the man for it; you are a Company man, and you are not welcome."[23] How could a stranger thus greeted speak or write without prejudice of the one who received him?

[23]From Fr. Lestanc's lecture, as above.

Moreover, there was the question of language. Commissioner Smith's knowledge of French was then very imperfect. If the priest happened to address a halfbreed in that language, his words were quite liable to be misconstrued by the mind of a stranger already biassed against him. It is thus that, according to the commissioner, when the fate of Scott was mentioned to Riel, "Père Lestanc interposed in French words meaning: 'Is there no way of escape?' "[24] a sentence which, as translated by Smith, is open to a damaging interpretation, while, as a matter of fact, Lestanc meant: "Could you not find means of avoiding that execution?"[25]

Another instance of misapprehension due to a similar cause is Donald Smith's charge,[26] that he was threatened by Riel and Father Lestanc. Both men simply warned him of the danger in which he was putting himself and the country by trying, as they believed, to disunite the people and thereby provoke a civil war, out of spite for Riel, a circumstance to which Smith alludes himself in his report.[27] Of his

[24]In Begg's "History of the North-West," vol. I., p. 507.

[25]Lestanc's lecture.

[26]Begg, *ubi suprà*, vol. I., p. 496.

[27]*Ibid.*, p. 494. An instance of the wrong conclusions which biassed minds may reach out of premises that are in reality far from warranting them, is found in the following from Boulton's "Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellions" (p. 61): "The attitude of the Church seemed more clear when O'Donohue, who at that time was being educated for the priesthood at St. Boniface, and was a teacher there, saw fit to leave those duties to join Riel." From the context it is plain that the author of that work sees in that step evident connivance of the Church with the insurgents. Now here is what we read in the MSS. Memoir of Rev. Mr. Giroux, who never

animosity against the president we have unequivocal tokens in his own document, and, unknown to himself, that animosity betrays him into making unwarranted assertions and even self-contradictory statements.[28]

One more remark on that unfortunate execution. As an outcome of the outbreak of 1869, we have to

saw Maj. Boulton's book: "The Administrator [Fr. Lestanc] having learned that Mr. O'Donoghue was paying pretty frequent visits to Riel, and was wont to meet Mr. Kennedy at Fort Garry, he called to himself the young ecclesiastic and expressly forbade him to go to the fort." Giroux's Memoir then goes on to relate how O'Donoghue preferred to forsake all his prospects of advancement in the Church to severing his connection with his new friends and their plans.

[28]For instance, p. 492 of his Report, as given by Begg (*op. cit.*), he refers to the lamentable spectacle offered by "the fort with its large supply of ammunition, provisions and stores of all kinds [which] was in the possession of the French halfbreeds, whose leaders had declared their determination to use every effort for the purpose of annexing the Territory to the United States!" while, p. 509, he relates how, in the course of a conversation, Riel told him: "Do not attempt to prejudice us against the Americans, for although *we have not been with them,* they are with us, and have been better friends to us than the Canadians."

Near the end of his Report he implies that *many* of the Catholic priests then in Red River, being Frenchmen, did not care for the British connection, because of their little familiarity with British laws and institutions. We have already seen that Father Lestanc was the only native of France then in contact with the people; but it would be impossible to doubt for a moment the loyalty of so sternly scrupulous a man, especially at a time when he was filling the place of a Canadian bishop who was so well known for his patriotism. The same remark applies to his two French companions, who would never have dared to act against their bishop's sentiments. Were any one disposed to question the appositeness of this observation, we would only have to refer him to an account of the Red River troubles written from an American point of view, wherein a certain party is represented as desirous of bringing about the annexation of the country to the United States. That account takes for granted what its author so heartily wished; then it goes on to remark that the party referred to "thought General Riel was similarly inclined," an assertion which we know to be absolutely without foundation; "but," continues the correspondent, "the priests, who really have more power than either, were opposed to it," that is, to annexation (Blue Book, p. 81).

reckon the death of Hon. J. Sutherland's son, who was shot by Parisien as the latter was escaping from his captors; of the same Parisien, who died of the ill-treatment he then received, and of Elzéar Goulet, who was stoned to death as he swam across the Red River pursued by a mob of volunteers from Ontario. Yet the English-Canadian press scarcely mentioned those most regrettable events, which are now practically forgotten by the majority of English readers, though the victim of the first, at least, was an inoffensive young man, the son of a respectable family, against the memory of whom nothing can be said.

But when a man who was known as an inveterate perturber of the peace, a most violent character who had all but taken the life of his employer, an agitator who gloried in his determination to leave no effort untried to overthrow the Government which the country had deliberately given itself, when that man had been executed after a regular trial because the effects of his violence (from which he would not desist) were becoming disastrous, a perfect hue and cry was raised against the French from one end of Ontario to the other. A wind of dementia seemed to agitate the most solid heads; the most absurd stories and palpable inventions[29] were swallowed as Gospel

[29]It is related that some genius, having got hold of a phial, filled it with the blood of some animal, and, finding a stray bit of rope, perambulated the towns of Ontario with these treasures, which he exhibited as the blood of Scott, and the rope with which he had been bound; whereupon the guileless shouted and screamed and howled, vowing vengeance on the halfbreeds and hysterically calling for the head of Riel. Fanaticism was so rampant that apparently

truths; the death of Riel and his lieutenants was resolved upon; a prize was put on the halfbreed leader's head, and even grave Judge E. B. Wood, in his address to the jury before whom one of those lieutenants was tried, did not scruple to compare uncontrollable Scott, executed for his faults, to the spotless Lamb sacrificed by the Jews!

Why, we may ask, why this unwarranted tempest and those incredible excesses? Two words will suffice for an answer: Thomas Scott was an Orangeman. Hence, as long as bigotry and fanaticism hold sway over a certain class of men, some are bound to speak of his execution as of a murder, and will continue to call him a martyr. With such men the claims of impartial history count for very little: passions alone rule, and passions are blind.

no one marvelled at the kindness of the monster in allowing the sympathizers of Scott to gather up his blood in presence of his executioners, that it might be exhibited to stir up the passions of thoughtless mobs! Had any one then cared for truth, he would have soon found out that, immediately on the shooting of the poor man, Riel had ordered the evacuation of the spot, threatening with confinement any one who would be found there five minutes afterwards.

[30] "Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambrose D. Lépine," p. 120.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE END OF THE INSURRECTION, AND THE FENIAN RAID. 1870-1871.

The trend of the momentous events of those years, 1869-70, has diverted our attention from the head of the diocese so violently agitated. But the very course of the same now takes us back to him. He was attending the great Council of the Vatican, when the Canadian Government, now thoroughly awakened to the seriousness of the situation in the Middle West, begged him to return to Red River, and use his influence to pacify, as they said, the country of his adoption. Though his representations had previously met with so scant consideration, he patriotically put aside all personal feelings and, on February 9, 1870, arrived at Ottawa, where he had several interviews with the Governor-General and some of his ministers. Armed with letters from them and carrying to his distracted people a formal promise of amnesty for all that had been done, the bishop set out for the west. One of the documents to be communicated to them emanated from the Secretary of State for the Provinces, Honourable Joseph Howe, and contained the following: "It is important that you should know that the proceedings by which the

lives and properties of the people of Rupert's Land were jeopardized[1] for a time were at once disavowed and condemned by the Government of the Dominion, as you will readily discover in the dispatch addressed by me to Mr. McDougall on the 24th of December.''[2]

The bishop's early return was learned the very day of Scott's execution, and on March 9th he was again at St. Boniface. There he was grieved not to receive from Riel the welcome to which his children had accustomed him. The very name of Ottawa then jarred on the nerves of the halfbreed leader, who could not be persuaded of the sincerity of its professions of friendliness, and Mgr. Taché was known to be the bearer of messages from the Federal authorities. Hence when the garrison of Fort Garry asked permission to go and receive his blessing, he allowed them to do so, but did not budge himself, remarking: ''It is not the Bishop of St. Boniface, it is Canada, who passes.'' Moreover, he put guards at the doors of the palace, a mark of unfounded suspicion which deeply wounded the prelate.

[1]This official admission disposes of Dr. Bryce's implicit contention that the greed of the Ontarians had only ''unoccupied lands'' for object.

[2]Begg, ''The Creation of Manitoba,'' p. 313. Here are some of the incriminating remarks addressed to Mr. McDougall by the Secretary of State: ''You have used the Queen's name without her authority, and organized an armed force within the Territory of the Hudson Bay Company without warrant or instructions. . . . As the organization and use of such a force by you was, under the circumstances, entirely illegal, the Governor-General and Council cannot disguise from you the weight of responsibility you have incurred.'' (Blue Book, p. 83).

Yet bearing in mind only the interests of peace, the latter went himself two days later to visit the president and other members of the Provisional Government, when, returning to more generous sentiments, Riel granted him a right royal reception.

On the following Sunday (March 13th), the bishop preached "an eloquent sermon" on the situation, when "the church was crowded to excess." This, according to Alex. Begg, had a most beneficial influence on subsequent events. Two days later a special session of the convention was held to hear what he had to say, which was productive of great good. At his request Riel released over fifteen of his prisoners, among whom was Major Boulton, and the three delegates who, owing to the prevailing distrust of Ottawa, had not yet started on their mission, were ordered thither. They took with them the latest copy of the Bill of Rights, together with credentials from the Provisional Government. The former contained twenty clauses, one of which asked that both "English and French languages be common in the Legislature and the Courts"; another, that "the Lieutenant-Governor (a third added the Judges of the Superior Court) be familiar with both languages." Clause VII. stipulated that the schools must be separate, and that the monies therefor should be divided among the various religious denominations in proportion to their respective population.

The delegates reached Ottawa on April 11th; but

so high ran the excitement caused by the execution of Scott that two of them, Messrs. Ritchot and Alfred Scott, were immediately arrested for participation in the "crime." However, they were soon after released, while the fanatics of Ontario were holding indignation meetings which usually terminated in a resolution to lynch the two delegates should they ever come their way.

This incident, whereby common law was set at defiance, was deemed so grave that it occasioned telegraphic correspondence between the London and the Ottawa Governments.[3] On the banks of the Red it led to a further demonstration of Riel's loyalty to Great Britain. For some time, at the instance of Bishop Taché, the Union Jack had replaced the fleur-de-lys and shamrock of the Provisional Government, which the prelate thought of a nature to mislead such of the English-speaking as did not know its real significance. On hearing of the outrage on the delegates, O'Donoghue, who bore no love to the British, took down their flag and hoisted in its stead his beloved shamrock standard. At the same time, he did not scruple to trample the former under foot. This having been reported to Riel, he immediately ordered the Union Jack to be raised again, and sta-

[3]On the 18th of April Earl Granville cabled: "Was arrest of delegates authorized by Canadian Government? Send full information by telegraph." To which the Governor-General replied (25th April): "Delegates discharged by order of magistrates. Proceedings against them at an end," and later on a long cablegram of explanations followed. In another cable (18th May) Lord Granville manifested his pleasure at learning of their release.

tioned at the foot of the pole one of his most trusted captains, André Nault, with explicit orders to *shoot* anyone who should again tamper with it.[4]

The result of the negotiations between the delegates and the Canadian Government, represented by John A. Macdonald and Sir George Etienne Cartier, was quite satisfactory. It has become known as the Manitoba Act, which, adopted May 3rd, was signed in the name of the Queen on the following 12th. It embodied practically all the demands contained in the Bill of Rights, and is to this day the greatest monument to the wisdom which prompted the resistance of 1869.

The mission of the Provisional Government was thereby at an end. Yet, owing to local and other circumstances, disarming would have been equivalent to calling on civil war. Therefore, following Sir George's advice, Riel continued at his post, with the intention of yielding the direction of affairs to Mr. Adam G. Archibald, who had been named Lieutenant-Governor. At the same time, it was known that troops, English and Canadian, were coming on a mission of peace, as their commander publicly declared[5] in a proclamation which Riel himself caused to be printed, in order to facilitate the trans-

[4]This is probably the incident referred to by Alex. Begg in his first volume of the "History of the North-West," p. 485, and said to have happened on the 20th of April.

[5]Col. G. I. Wolseley; see Begg's "The Creation of Manitoba," p. 383.

fer of the country to Canada, should objection thereto be raised.[6]

It never entered into Riel's head to oppose this force, though, with the intimate knowledge of the country possessed by his own men and the military stores at their disposal, this could most certainly have been done with success. Yet the question of resistance was one that long disturbed his peace of mind and occasioned almost daily wranglings with his treasurer, O'Donoghue, who was insistent on the advisability of making a stand against Wolseley. The scenes this difference of opinions occasioned between leader and lieutenant are to this day well remembered by many eye-witnesses. Hence the supreme injustice of accusing Riel of cowardly sneaking away at the approach of the red-coats after he had used such loud talk before they came.

Strong in his sense of the legality of his position, he expected to have the privilege of welcoming the new governor when, on the arrival of Wolseley's force, he was assured that his life was in danger if he stayed one minute longer, and had to leave for the south. Even one of his worst enemies, General Butler, is a witness to the truth of this assertion. As

[6]Lord Wolseley and others seek to make it appear that the expedition he led was destined to put down the "rebellion;" and yet he admits (p. 224) that so favourable were the terms granted to the halfbreeds, after the negotiations with the delegates "Mr. Riel had been invited to send to Ottawa" (p. 222), that all opposition [was thus] removed in the eyes of the French, which is tantamount to saying: whereas the halfbreeds had been granted what they had risen for, an expedition was then dispatched to put down their opposition to the realization of their own wishes! We wonder if this is a sample of English logic. See Appendix D.

the soldier mentioned the rumours which represented him as making active preparations to resist the approaching expedition:

"Nothing is more false than these statements," exclaimed Riel. "I only wish to retain power until I can resign it to a proper government. I have done everything for the sake of peace and to prevent bloodshed among the people of the land."[7]

Were any confirmation of this needed, we would only have to adduce the letter he wrote (July 24, 1870), to Bishop Taché, who had returned to Ottawa to promote more efficaciously by verbal explanations the cause of peace and of the promised amnesty. "We are preparing ourselves," wrote the president, "for the arrival of the governor. We shall try to show him as many horsemen[8] as possible. What a task you have assumed, my Lord, in repairing to that so wicked Ottawa! We have friends there, but who could count our enemies? What is consoling is to be a Christian, and to think that no real harm can happen to us as long as God is with us. Be that as it may, the troops and the governor will be received with enthusiasm."[9] And in a postscript: "My most profound respects to Mr. Archibald; we earnestly desire his coming."[10]

[7] "The Great Lone Land," p. 134.

[8] To accompany him as an escort.

[9] Translated from the original French.

[10] Yet, in spite of these eminently peaceful designs, Capt. Huyshe writes that "it is evident that Riel would have fought it out, had his men stuck to him." And why is the soldier so sure of this?

A few days later, one who had been living by the side of Riel ever since the capture of Fort Garry, though he had to suffer thereby, J. H. McTavish, wrote to the same prelate: "I feel confident that the Provisional Government are determined *coûte que coûte* to hand everything over quietly to the proper authorities."[11]. The French locution *coûte que coûte* ("come what may") was rendered necessary by the intelligence the same party had to communicate to the bishop relative to the Canadian sympathizers remaining in the country. "They entertain the hope that, as soon as the troops arrive, martial law will be proclaimed, to be followed by the hanging of a few of the French party; such is their kind expectation." Hence Mr. McTavish considers it "highly advisable that Mr. Archibald should be on the spot at least as soon as the troops."

Unfortunately for those who participated in the movement, he was not; hence the flight of Riel, Lépine and O'Donoghue, when they learnt the real

Because, forsooth, "inside of the fort were found several field-guns, some of which were mounted in the bastion and over the gateway, a large quantity of ammunition, and a number of old pattern muskets, many of which were loaded and capped, showing that the intention had been up to the last moment to resist the entry of the troops" (pp. 196, 197). Not being a captain, we know little of things military; but we had so far been under the impression that, especially in troubled times, guards were not wont to beat their rounds armed with empty muskets.

Again, capital has been made of the fact that the open fort was found without the British standard flowing over its walls. Yet it is locally well known that it had been taken down only the preceding night, and that its absence at the top of Fort Garry's flag-staff in the forenoon of Aug. 24, 1870, was due solely to the downpour of rain, which continued to fall till the arrival of the troops.

[11]Report of the Select Committee, p. 36.

sentiments of the troops, who arrived within sight of Fort Garry in the morning of August 24, 1870.[12]

The advent of the soldiers was for the French halfbreeds of Manitoba the dawn of an era of active persecution at the hands of bigots from the east, which was to last a number of years and sorely tried their patience. Riel and Lépine were banished and the Government of Ontario offered a premium of five thousand dollars to anyone who would effect their capture, a circumstance which made life almost unbearable for them and led to several attempts at outrage. In spite of Wolseley's assurance that "his mission is one of peace," made at a time when he did not know how he would be received by Riel, the commander of the troops himself seems to have set the ball rolling, by calling him and his sympathizers *banditti* in a second proclamation issued when he had no longer anything to fear from him. It would be foreign to the scope of this work to expatiate on the indignities, assaults, murders, incendiary fires, continual threats, meted out to those who had concurred in wrenching the Manitoba Act from the Dominion of Canada. But we cannot conceal that the mainspring of such persecution was religious prejudice more than a sense of loyalty to the Crown. It arose from the resentment of Scott's brothers in fanaticism.

[12]A few authors, among whom Alex. Begg in his "History of the North-West" (vol. II., pp. 20, 21), make the troops enter Fort Garry on the 23rd of August, 1870.

In his first proclamation Colonel Wolseley had declared that his force represented "no party, either in religion or politics."[13] Yet one of the first acts of some members of the First Ontario Rifles was to establish an Orange lodge, for which a warrant had been carried all through the Dawson route. It was organized within a fortnight after the arrival of that regiment, and the spirit which animated its founders is patent from the fact that they used for their first meeting "a small table taken previously from the room inside the fort in which Louis Riel slept. . . . Inside two years the lodge increased largely in members until, early in 1872, it contained upward of two hundred members, and was reckoned the largest lodge in the Dominion."[14]

The results of this anti-Catholic activity may easily be guessed. Yet the halfbreeds were not without protection. In the first place, Governor Archibald was really the right man in the right place. He soon became a warm friend of Bishop Taché, and by his prudence and forbearance, no less than by his open sympathy for the oppressed, he certainly averted calamities that would otherwise have burst upon the country.

And then, in prevision of the definite organization of the new province, the Bishop of St. Boniface had had the forethought of bringing from Quebec a little phalanx of young men, able and true, who almost

[13]Begg, "The Creation of Manitoba," p. 383.
[14]Hill, "History of Manitoba," pp. 587, 588.

immediately had a not inconsiderable share in the government of their adopted land. Prominent among them were Messrs. Joseph Dubuc, Marc A. Girard, Joseph Royal and Alphonse A. C. Larivière, who played most honourable rôles in the political arena of the young province.

We might now revert to the purely ecclesiastical history of Western Canada, after having somewhat tarried on the narration of events which have a right to a place in this work only in proportion to the extent the Church has been, rightly or wrongly, implicated in them, and because the chief actors in the same were her own children. Yet we feel that our account of the insurrection of 1869-70 would be incomplete, and the real character of the Catholic half-breeds but imperfectly sketched without an outline of events which transpired in their midst one year later, when a crisis arose which, but for the fidelity of the oppressed Catholics, might have resulted in a most important displacement of the political boundaries of the whole Canadian West.

Apart from the murder of Goulet, already mentioned, and the banishment of the Catholic leaders in the movement of protestation, a Mr. Tanner was killed by falling from his carriage, whose horse the soldiers from the east had wilfully frightened. Mr. André Nault, who had guarded the British flag against the rage of O'Donoghue, suffered on American soil repeated thrusts of Orange bayonets and was left for dead. Rowdies of the same hue went

so far as to threaten to kill "Big Taché" and to burn his house and church. Newcomers from Ontario forcibly took from a group of halfbreeds the lands they occupied at *Rivière aux Islets de Bois.* In short, as Governor Archibald wrote confidentially to Sir John Macdonald, "many of [the French halfbreeds] have been so beaten and outraged that they feel as if they were living in a state of slavery."[15]

We shall presently see how, under the guidance of their Church, these same men were to avenge themselves.[16]

It is certainly not beyond the bounds of probability that when, in 1867, the United States acquired Alaska they counted on some contingencies that would ultimately do away with the isolation of that Territory. There can scarcely be any doubt that they had in Assiniboia agents who closely watched the situation and strove to make it turn to their advantage. This was known at Ottawa and, as early as June 22, 1866, "the Executive Council of Canada expressed the opinion that the most inviting parts of the Territory [Assiniboia] would shortly be peopled by persons whom the Company were unable to control, and who would establish a government and tribunals of their own and assert their political independence."[17]

[15]Report Select Committee, p. 156.

[16]For a fuller account of what was to follow, the reader who is conversant with French is invited to consult our articles in *La Nouvelle France* (Quebec, 1907-08), *"Aux Sources de l'Histoire Manitobaine."*

[17]Blue Book, p. 171.

On March 8, 1868, that is, scarcely a year after the acquisition of the Russian possessions, the Legislature of Minnesota passed the following resolution: "We regret to be informed of a purpose to transfer the territory between Minnesota and Alaska to the Dominion of Canada by an order in council at London without a vote of Selkirk and the settlers upon the sources of the Saskatchewan River, who largely consist of emigrants from the United States; and we would respectfully urge that the President and the Congress of the United States shall represent to the Government of Great Britain that such an action will be an unwarrantable interference with the principles of self-government and cannot be regarded with indifference by the people of the United States."[18]

It was scarcely possible to confess in clearer language the covetousness of the Americans for the Canadian West. Hence the interest with which the least of Riel's sayings and doings were watched at the frontier, and the offer of immense sums of money, arms and ammunition,[19] which came from the south, but were spurned by the so-called rebel.

Having failed to make him and his people waver in their fidelity to their Sovereign, when they were in power, the Fenians of the United States (who were but the tools, the vanguard of the American people of the north) thought that this loyalty must

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[19] Bishop Taché in Select Committee, p. 42.

have vanished now that Riel had become an outlaw and his sympathizers were downtrodden by the invaders from Ontario. The invasion of Manitoba was therefore resolved upon by O'Donoghue and the other Fenian leaders.

Success was a matter of certainty provided the French population joined in the fray. They were known to be "excellent horsemen, accustomed to the use of arms, and to obey the leaders whom they themselves select, when they traverse the plains in search of the buffalo."[20] After the shedding of the first blood, they could have easily raised corps aggregating eight hundred or more choice men to be matched against the eighty soldiers that remained at Fort Garry "to preserve the peace of half a continent," as Governor Archibald had it.[21] Moreover some two thousand workmen, with a large percentage of ex-soldiers who had seen fire in the Civil War, had just finished their work on railways within Minnesota. Most of them being now idle, they would have been delighted to lend their aid against the hated Britishers.

Speaking of one of the Fenian leaders, Tuttle, the continuator of Gunn, remarks that "he was almost certain of receiving a friendly reception from the French halfbreeds, while it was doubtful whether the English halfbreeds were so much in love with

[20]Blue Book, p. 28.
[21]Select Committee, p. 140.

Canada as to fight on her behalf."[22] According to the historian Hill, "O'Donoghue's plan was to cross the frontier with a body of armed men, compelling every man he met to accompany him, either as a prisoner or as a confederate, and thus swell his ranks till he reached the parish above the fort, which contained the main body of the population. These, he believed, would join him at once and aid in taking and plundering Fort Garry; when he would be reinforced with a sufficient number of men from the United States to enable him to hold the country."[23] In a public document the Lieutenant-Governor himself acknowledged that the French population, yesterday derided and oppressed, was now the key to the situation, as the Fenians believed it to be ready to fall into their arms and aid any invasion.[24]

To make sure of this, however, O'Donoghue secretly dispatched a courier to the leaders at St. Vital, and, on Riel's advice, André Nault went with another to confer with the prospective invaders, as the Métis chief wished to ascertain the real aims of his quondam lieutenant at Fort Garry. In the greatest secrecy a meeting of the Fenian leaders was held in the house of a Charles Grant, some eighteen miles from the mouth of the Pembina River. They assured the delegates of the Manitoban Métis that they had already enlisted three thousand five hundred and

[22]Gunn and Tuttle, "History of Manitoba," p. 470.
[23]"History of Manitoba," pp. 337, 338.
[24]Report of Select Committee, p. 147.

sixty men, had plenty of money and relied on plans of campaign which honest Nault could not help finding of a rather drastic nature. Yet he refrained from commenting on the same, promising only to give a faithful account of all he had heard to Louis Riel and friends.

Meantime the wildest rumours were being circulated in the new province, and the Orangemen who, but a month before were so loud in their denunciations of the "rebels," seemed unanimous in the belief that now was the time for the French to show their loyalty and earn at last the so much debated amnesty for past irregularities.

Bishop Taché had left for the east, but not before he had had a conversation, at St. Norbert, with Louis Riel, whom he sounded as to his real sentiments. The Métis leader declared to the prelate that he "hated the Fenians because they were a secret society and as such were condemned by the Church." At the same time he was in a quandary. "I cannot go forward and combat them," he remarked, "for those who will come after me [meaning the newcomers from the east] are sure to kill me."

But, convinced that "the country would be lost,"[25] if even part of the French turned against the provincial authorities, Lieutenant-Governor Archibald had an interview with Mr. Ritchot, the outcome of which was a letter dated October 4, 1871, wherein the latter expressed Riel's delicate position and the wish

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

for a declaration of immunity from prosecution in case he should come out of his retirement. Archibald wrote on the morrow: "Should Mr. Riel come forward as suggested, he need be under no apprehension that his liberty be interfered with in any way. . . . It is hardly necessary for me to add that the coöperation of the French halfbreeds and their leaders in support of the Crown, under the present circumstances, will be very welcome."

On that very day (October 5th), thirteen of the most influential Métis met in Riel's house, at St. Vital. It has been the good fortune of the present writer to publish lately the minutes of that and all the following meetings, after the original record of the same, in Louis Riel's own handwriting, discovered by the most opportune of accidents as his house was undergoing repairs. We gather from the beginning of that document that the halfbreed leaders were, on the 5th of October, almost hourly expecting the return of André Nault. After the enumeration of the names of those who took part in the proceedings, the secretary to the meeting says: "No details on O'Donoghue," and Nault who assisted at all the subsequent assemblies is not mentioned in the first.

Now, as the English historians could not well ignore the loyalty of the French halfbreeds in that terrible emergency, they have generally stooped to the unfair expedient of insinuating, or even plainly stating, that they offered their services only when

they knew that they were no more needed.[26] After the discovery of the above mentioned papers, all historians who have any regard for truth will have to revise the dicta of their predecessors on that score.

O'Donoghue, with four of his "generals," was captured near the boundary on October 5th. The first meeting of the Métis leaders took place at 11 A.M. of the same day, and though absolutely nothing could then be known of the O'Donoghue fizzle, twelve out of thirteen halfbreeds (among whom was Riel) declared themselves in favour of assisting the Provincial Government against the invaders.

At 9 A.M. of the following day nothing had as yet transpired concerning the Fenian reverse. Nay, André Nault and companion, just arrived, reported that "Fort Pembina must have been captured since Wednesday morning. . . . O'Donoghue wanted the coöperation of the Métis for the success of the Declaration of Independence of the country; he had money and in time he could introduce five men into the country as against Canada's one."[27]

This was indeed encouraging. Did the Métis chiefs swerve on that account from their allegiance to the Sovereign whose fellow subjects had been "treating them like slaves"? The majority (Riel,

[26]See Hill, p. 346; Gunn and Tuttle, p. 471. Bryce fails to mention in any of his books the part played by the Métis in the Fenian Raid.

[27]*Aux Sources de l'Histoire Manitobaine*, p. 108.

A. D. Lépine, E. de la Gimodière, Honourable Dauphinais, Angus McKay) were warmly in favour of the legitimate authority, whilst the others, without exception, were loyal, though they did not manifest such enthusiasm. The assembly decided that "couriers must immediately be dispatched in all directions" to convoke local assemblies of the people and persuade them to side with the Government."

It were superfluous to proceed with the details of those assemblies. As a result of the agitation, companies of halfbreed soldiers were formed at St. Boniface, White Horse Plains, Pointe des Chênes, Ste. Agathe, Pointe Coupée, St. Norbert and St. Vital, all with a view to assist the Government against the invaders who were known to be concentrating their forces at St. Joseph, near the boundary, where all authors (and Governor Archibald) say that everybody was sure they were going to renew the attack in a much more serious manner. On October 7th, Riel formally offered by letter the services of his forces, and, after having thanked him (October 8th) for his loyalty and that of his men, the governor purposely crossed the river to review at St. Boniface some three or four hundred of them led by the ex-President of the Provisional Government and his adjutant, A. D. Lépine. Shortly thereafter some of them were actually sent to meet the prospective invaders from St. Joseph.

But, on hearing of this most unexpected stand taken by the French, the Fenians lost heart, and

the Canadian West was saved to the British Crown. "If the halfbreeds had taken a different course, I do not believe the province would now be in our possession." It is no less a personage than Lieutenant-Governor Archibald himself who says so, in his sworn deposition before the Select Committee of 1874.[28]

The teaching of the Church had borne good fruit, and the advice of her priests who "were opposed to annexation"[29] had not been given in vain.

[28]Report Select Committee, p. 153. Independently of the lately discovered documents, evidence is not lacking in the deposition of that upright man to prove Riel's perfect loyalty and constant straightforwardness at the time of that crisis. Thus he has (p. 146) the following most important statement: "Father Ritchot had informed me that everything was going on satisfactorily, but I desired to inform my mind from different and independent sources. There were a number of French who never sided with, and were never personal friends of, Riel, and I got information from these to the effect that Riel attended a meeting at White Horse Plains, about a week before the invasion, and did his best to induce the people to turn out and join the Government; that nothing was decided at that meeting, but that two or three days afterwards a meeting was held at the same place, at which Riel took the same view; that then there was an arrangement that all should meet at St. Vital on the next day, 4th October; that they did then meet, and then Riel took the same line, and it was finally decided by all but two of the meeting that they should join the Government and come out.

"The two refusing had been assaulted at Winnipeg, and it was with them a personal matter."

[29]Blue Book, p. 81. See also Report Select Committee, p. 140.

GOV. ARCHIBALD WELCOMING RIEL AND HIS TROOPS

PART V

Later Developments East of the Rockies

CHAPTER XXVI.

ORGANIZATION OF ST. BONIFACE PROVINCE.

1870-1874.

The mustard seed planted by Provencher had by this time become a tree of respectable dimensions. Not only had its growth been rapid since the arrival of the Oblates on the western plains, but offshoots of the same, whose branches reached out to the frozen sea, the Rocky Mountains and Hudson Bay, encompassing tribes of all kinds and languages, had gradually sprung up from its roots. These were now to be organized by the Supreme Husbandman with such relations towards one another as should prevent overcrowding and mutual interference. In a few words, the See of St. Boniface, for years lonely in its western solitude, after having been given a satellite in the shape of the Vicariate-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie, was soon to be raised in God's hierarchy and to receive two other suffragans.

Chronologically speaking, we have now reached

this important stage in the development of the Western Church. But the interests of clearness and unity of narrative having forced us to neglect some events or incidents which had no connection with the Red River troubles or their aftermath, we shall now slightly retrograde in our recital of the Church's doings in the north and middle west of Canada.

The reader may not have entirely forgotten the special fields entrusted to the care of the principal labourers in the Lord's vineyard. Under the immediate jurisdiction of Bishop Grandin in his capacity of an Oblate superior, Father Leduc directed, in 1870, the episcopal residence of St. Albert and the adjacent missions, building that same year a new church at headquarters which he fondly styles "a veritable monument, thanks to the excellent Brother Bowes, who made the plans and executed them."[1] Father Dupin was at St. Paul of the Crees, devoting himself to the salvation of Indians whose docility was not always up to what the missionary had a right to expect, while Fathers André and Bourgine were following the halfbreed hunters in their chase of the buffalo. Végreville had the important mission of Lac la Biche for his share. The older post of Ste. Anne was in the hands of a young priest, Father Fourmond, who had made his vows the preceding year (April 21, 1869). At Ile à la Crosse presided Father Légeard who, in spite of an unsatisfactory

[1] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XI., p. 195.

state of health, exerted himself on behalf of the Chippewayans and Crees attending that oldest among the northern missions, and endeavouring gradually to overcome the ravages of fire in his establishment. In the Far East, Father Gasté, ably seconded by Father Legoff, was ruling the poor mission of St. Peter on Lake Caribou, and occasionally pushed on as far as the dreary shores of Hudson Bay, where he visited (for the first time on April 21, 1868), stray bands of Eskimos, for whom, however, he could do little owing to his ignorance of their language.

On March 9, 1870, he was himself delighted by the arrival of his vicar of missions, Bishop Grandin, who had been on a series of episcopal visitations ever since December 28th of the preceding year, when he had left his residence of St. Albert for Lake Caribou

Last, not least, Father Lacombe, always indefatigable in his zeal for the welfare of souls, was hurrying from place to place, preaching retreats and superintending the victualling of the missions, when he was not accompanying his wayward children of the plains. On the first of February of that year (1870) we see him sally out from St. Albert and search for his people as they themselves look for buffalo. Many days does he spend in the lone prairies of what has been called Alberta after him.[2] Finally his perseverance is rewarded with success.

[2]As we have seen, St. Albert (which he founded) was named after his own patron saint, and the new province after that mission.

Yonder, not far from the horizon, an immense camp is sighted. His white flag with red cross in hand, the veteran priest makes for the human agglomeration, whose nationality he does not even care to ascertain. Lacombe is loved and respected by all; what matters it to him whether the strangers in sight are Crees or Blackfeet? Is he not the father of either?

In the present case it is the Blackfeet that greet him as they recognize his little flag. "The divine man has come! Him whose heart is good I love," he hears on all sides as he alights. Three full weeks does he stay with his people, leading their primitive life and sharing alike their hard and good fortunes. The Indians happen to be well disposed; he improves his opportunities by addressing them daily on religious topics, teaching them prayers and hymns, while he also perfects himself in his knowledge of their dialect.

This devotedness of the Catholic missionaries is recognized even by their born adversaries. Just at the time that Lacombe and his brother Oblates were thus sacrificing themselves on the altar of a self-imposed duty, a writer of renown, who sedulously keeps his own religious persuasions as a Catholic in the background and is not always fair to the bulk of those who professed the same in the Middle West, the author of "The Great Lone Land," prefaces by the following words a quotation from a publication emanating from a Protestant body

"A few miles northwest of Edmonton a settlement composed exclusively of French halfbreeds is situated on the shores of a rather extensive lake which bears the name of the Grand Lac, or St. Albert. This settlement is presided over by a mission of French Roman Catholic clergymen of the Order of Oblates, headed by a bishop of the same Order and nationality. It is a curious contrast to find in this distant and strange land men of culture and high mental excellence devoting their lives to the task of civilizing the wild Indians of the forest and the prairie—going far in advance of the settler, whose advent they have but too much cause to dread. I care not what may be the form of belief which the on-looker may hold—whether it be in unison or in antagonism with that faith preached by these men; but he is only a poor semblance of a man who can behold such a sight through the narrow glass of sectarian feeling and see in it nothing but the self-interested labour of persons holding opinions foreign to his own. He who has travelled through the vast colonial empire of Britain—that empire which covers one-third of the entire habitable surface of the globe and probably half of the lone lands of the world—must often have met with men dwelling in the midst of wild, savage peoples whom they tended with a strange and mother-like devotion. If you asked who was this stranger who dwelt thus among wild men in these wild places, you were told he was the French missionary; and if you sought him in his lonely hut,

you found ever the same surroundings, the same simple evidences of a faith which seemed more than human. I do not speak from hearsay or book knowledge. I have myself witnessed the scenes I now try to recall. And it has ever been the same, east and west, far in advance of trader or merchant, of sailor or soldier, has gone this dark-haired, fragile man, whose earliest memories are thick with sunny scenes by bank of Loire or vine-clad slope of Rhone or Garonne, and whose vision in this life, at least, is never destined to rest again upon these oft-remembered places. Glancing through a pamphlet one day at Edmonton, a pamphlet which recorded the progress of a Canadian Wesleyan missionary society, I read the following extract from the letter of a western missionary: 'These representatives of the Man of Sin, these priests are hard workers; summer or winter they follow the camps, suffering great privations. They are indefatigable in their efforts to make converts. But their converts,' he adds, 'have never heard of the Holy Ghost.' "[3]

Even the gravest Cato will, no doubt, indulge in a broad smile at this last assertion, which, we are sorry to say, is but a fair specimen of the reliability of too many sectarian publications. Are we then to suppose from that remark of the Wesleyan writer, that the Catholics of Alberta were taught to mention only the Father and the Son while making the sign of the cross?

[3] "The Great Lone Land," pp. 261, 262.

We repeat that it is sad to have to take to task for their reckless assertions books issued by the professional teachers of truthfulness. But the wild statement quoted by Gen. Butler is far from being alone in its glaring falsehood. Others there are which are all the more misleading as they are of a less startling nature. For instance, one Anglican missionary whose arrival in the Far North we have already chronicled, the Rev. Wm. C. Bompas, in a booklet on the (Anglican) "Diocese of Mackenzie River,"[4] unhesitatingly makes the most astounding declarations concerning the proportion of Catholics and Protestants within that territory. Similarly exaggerated and unreliable data furnished by sympathizers have likewise resulted in a readable life of that unique character, which unfortunately presents but a one-sided picture, lights without shadows.[5]

Far be it from us to detract in the least from the credit for zeal and good intentions due to any non-Catholic missionary. God alone is judge of intentions, and nobody else can properly weigh the amount of good accomplished by man. We are pre-

[4]London, 1888.

[5]"An Apostle of the North," by Rev. H. A. Cody, B.A., New York, 1908. The "Review of Historical Publications Relating to Canada" (vol. XIII., p. 180) cannot help finding the Life of Bishop Bompas "the work of an ardent admirer," and believes that "the note of admiration is perhaps overdone" in it. The same review, speaking of Bompas' interpretation of the Bible, finds it "sometimes a little fanciful." Those of a different faith who have known personally that unique figure will scarcely be so euphemistic in their appreciation of its idiosyncracies. They will none the less pray that the long labours of the Anglican Churchman on behalf of a cause he believed to be that of God, may win him mercy at the tribunal of the Sovereign Judge.

pared to give to Mr. Bompas and colleagues credit for the best of intentions, and we will not deny that they gave evidence of great activity, but we wish that activity had been of a less destructive nature. They might have attempted to make good Christians according to their lights without unceasingly destroying what little faith remained in the castaways of Catholicism and others by endless attacks on "superstitions," which were such only because grossly distorted by their own minds.[6]

By his peculiar idiosyncracies, especially during the first years of his career, Rev. Mr. Bompas acquired a notoriety which detracted not a little from his usefulness as a Christian minister. Who will be bold enough to declare that, with all his zeal on behalf of the Church of England, he was at all scrupulous in the exposition of her tenets or the administration of her sacraments? Had he acted on the banks of the Thames as he did on those of the Mackenzie, we doubt if he would have passed muster as an orthodox Churchman even in his own communion, comprehensive and "broad" in its doctrines as it is.

In 1870 he had transported the seat of his operations to Fort McPherson, near the territory of the Eskimos, after having made himself the butt of

[6]As we will see in our last part, Bompas had occasion to pass through the north of B. C., where the present writer spent 22 years. The Indians of those wilds still repeat with derision his caution given in an eastern Déné dialect, that "these (meaning their crosses) are nothing but brass, and God is not brass, but a spirit," as if he had naively thought them capable of believing anything else.

chaff among the natives in the south. Here is how Father Petitot describes one of his exploits:

"Dressed as a *bourgeois,* a black satchel full of tracts slung over his shoulder, and a glass of clear water in his hand, you see him going from lodge to lodge, asking everyone whether he wishes to be baptized. Later he did better still. Having persuaded a young couple to allow themselves to be christened, he convoked the English-speaking personnel of Fort McPherson in the large hall, and then addressing the cook:

" 'Anderson,' he said, 'have you got any water in the kitchen?'

" 'No, sir.'

" 'Well, then, give me some snow in a cup.'

"Having received the snow, he pours thereon the contents of a teapot that awaits the breakfast table by the fireside, and this snow mixed with tea and not yet melted he throws into the face of the two catechumens, who shake themselves like ducks, the officiant saying at the same time: 'William, Margaret. Amen.' This is his entire formula of baptism and in this consisted the whole of his august ceremony which excited general hilarity. A moment later, the clerk of the fort came in and drank the baptismal water of the minister, which he drew from the same source, the teapot.'"[7]

Who could blame the Catholic missionaries for having done all they could to nullify the action of

[7] *Missions,* vol. XI., pp. 158, 159.

such men, who deluded their followers into the belief that they had become Christians because they had received, with a name, some half-melted snow in the face; who, instead of instilling into the minds of the depraved sentiments of sorrow and a firm purpose of self-amendment, were constantly harping on the sinfulness of praying for help to the Mother of God and wearing the emblem of our redemption and the images of God's friends?[8]

The same Father Petitot, who tells us of Bompas' antics, forgets to mention the legendary Bible which the preacher generally wore suspended from his neck, ever ready to supply English texts to Indians who did not understand a word of that language.

Petitot crossed the Rockies in 1870 in the hope of improving on the work of his confrère Father Séguin among the Loucheux of the Yukon. Leaving Fort McPherson on June 17th, he went as far as Fort Yukon. But the results of his exertions were futile, and his life was only endangered among the Indians, through the undisguised hostility of the Protestant traders and their employees. Brought up with ridiculously false ideas of the priests and their religion, the Indians would have nothing to do with them, though after a while they deplored the

[8]According to Father Petitot, between themselves Revs. Bompas and Kirkby "made but one baptism in three years, and it was that of a bigamous Indian named Kaya, whom I expelled from the Church on account of his obduracy." (*Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. VIII., p. 288). This was written in 1868. Later on Mr. Kirkby converted (?) one Loucheux, price (according to the same authority) one plough, a pair of oxen, tea, sugar and flour. (*Ibid.*, p. 292).

fact that the Black Gown had come after the minister, inasmuch as they professed to be ill-treated by the latter, whom they accused of undue severity and even violence when certain Church regulations were concerned.

Meanwhile, Séguin was feeding his Loucheux flock at Good Hope; Eynard and Laity vied with each other at the Nativity; Grouard periodically sallied out from his post at Fort des Liards in search of souls to save, and at St. Joseph's, on Great Slave Lake, Gascon was still mourning the loss of Bro. Hand who, on August 23, 1869, had perished by drowning as he was taking up the fish nets of the mission.

Sadder still was the position of the missionaries at St. Albert during that eventful year, 1870. Smallpox had again broken out among the natives and halfbreeds, whose ranks it was thinning to an alarming extent. As a result of their exertions among the stricken flock, both Fathers Leduc and Bourgine caught the dread disease. This was enough to make devoted Father Lacombe fly to their assistance. Soon Ste. Anne's Mission was also invaded by the scourge. Fathers and sisters then multiplied themselves on behalf of the sick, and even the two future priests, Scholastic Brothers Doucet and Blanchet, were prostrated by the unsparing visitor.

In spite of all care, five of the orphans brought up by the sisters died, and it is of record that Father Fourmond was so untiring in his ministrations to the

stricken that, in the space of two months, he did not undress once in taking his sleep. In a few weeks, one hundred and twenty persons succumbed to the disease at that single place. Bishop Grandin was then at Ile à la Crosse. On hearing of the affliction of his people, he immediately returned west, to help his priests and console the survivors.

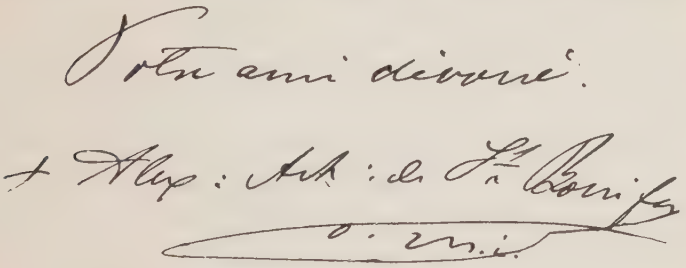
One of the Indians who had been severely bereaved in his family then threw himself at the feet of the prelate and, after having recited a Pater and an Ave in his own tongue, thus addressed him: "Great Chief of the Prayer, pray for me, for I am indeed wretched. Sickness has taken away six of my children. Only this one is left me and even he is in a pitiful state. I have nobody but him to take care of me, and thou seest that he is very sick. I am not angry against the Great Spirit, who has deprived me of my five boys and of my only daughter. In spite of that I thank Him; but do pray to Him that He may save me at least this one."[9]

The boy was apparently dying; yet the faith of his father was rewarded, and his son revived. Still farther west, at a great distance, some fifteen families camped in the vicinity of Fort Jasper, in the Rocky Mountains, were attacked with the plague and asked for succour. Without a moment's hesitation Father Leduc left his own sadly tried flock and went to dispense among them the consolations of religion.

It was in the following year (1871) that was con-

[9] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XI., p. 201.

summated the act of authority by the Supreme Pastor whereby was created the ecclesiastical province of St. Boniface. That important measure had been in preparation ever since May, 1868, when the Fathers of the Fourth Provincial Council of Quebec recognized its advisability. On the other hand, Bishop Grandin had to a great extent contributed to its realization by his humility. In the troubled state of the St. Boniface diocese—which bade fair to become chronic owing to the constant provocations of incoming settlers—he found a valid reason for declining the future succession of Bishop Taché, in spite of his title of coadjutor *cum futurâ successione.*



ARCHBISHOP TACHE'S SIGNATURE.

A memoir on the territory which it was proposed to detach from the diocese of Saint Boniface was sent (June 17, 1871), to Cardinal Barnabo, prefect of the Propaganda, wherein Bishops Taché and Grandin stated that "fifteen missionaries, one Canadian and fourteen French, all Oblates, labour in the proposed diocese of Saint Albert," and that within the same

district "there are five primary schools attended solely by Catholics."

Pursuant to these representations, St. Boniface became, September 22, 1871, a Metropolitan See, with three suffragans, namely, the newly created Bishop of St. Albert (Monseigneur Grandin), the Vicars-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie (Monseigneur Faraud) and of British Columbia. All the dignitaries of those ecclesiastical divisions were Oblates.

The most important missionary station of the Northwest, as regards natural resources, was that of Lac la Biche. After a prolonged correspondence between Grandin and Taché on the one hand, and the General Administration of the Oblates on the other, it had been temporarily put under the jurisdiction of Monseigneur Faraud, owing to its unparalleled advantages as a base of supplies for the northern missions. This arrangement came to an end in 1889, when that establishment reverted to the diocese of St. Albert.

As a complement to the new organization, Archbishop Taché was invested with the pallium on June 24, 1872, by Vicar-General Thibault, specially delegated for the circumstance.

Ever since he had been consecrated, Mgr. Taché, walking in the foot-steps of his predecessor, had been a great friend and protector of education. Schools flourished on the east side of the Red River and along the Assiniboine, but there were none for

the few Catholics on the Fort Garry side of the former. In 1869 the prelate had filled the want by appointing two sisters (Ste. Thérése and McDougall) to teach the young of what was soon to become the town of Winnipeg. Rooms had been rented for that purpose in a cottage belonging to a Mr. Drever, and a school opened on the first of May of the same year. The building having been soon after acquired by Mgr. Taché, the bishop said therein the first mass celebrated within the limits of Winnipeg (June 15, 1869). At the same time Rev. Joseph McCarthy, O.M.I., a young priest ordained at St. Boniface, January 24, 1869, was appointed pastor of the Catholics of Fort Garry and vicinity, though he continued to reside with his bishop.

Such were the beginnings of the now flourishing parish of St. Mary's and of the academy of the same name, both of which were even then placed under the patronage of the Mother of God.

While he was thus watching over the interests of his English-speaking children, Mgr. Taché was far from forgetting the French. Since the troubles accompanying the admission of the province into the Dominion, these people had become the usual target for the vilest attacks at the hands of fanatics. The necessity of having an organ to defend their cause in the eyes of the civilized world led to the foundation of *Le Métis,* a weekly paper which was first issued on May 27, 1871, under the editorship of

Mr. Joseph Royal, and did yeoman service in the interests of justice and Catholicism.

In November of the following year, the Federal authorities gave a token of good-will towards Catholic Manitobans by sending them as judge of the Supreme Court Mr. Louis Bétournay, who had previously been in partnership with Sir George Cartier, at Montreal. That gentleman was on the Bench to the day of his death, which occurred on November 30, 1879.

The *Métis* newspaper contributed towards keeping well before the public eye the great question of amnesty covering any possible irregularity in 1870, though Mgr. Taché personally did more by way of correspondence, visits to high parties and published pamphlets. No question was ever so near his heart, and it is really most wonderful to behold the dogged perseverance with which he followed it until he had brought it to a comparatively satisfactory termination. His extreme devotion to the interests of the halfbreeds was no doubt the prime motor in this campaign of three years' duration, though we cannot conceal the fact that his own veracity being implicitly impeached by the politicians, it became, as it were, a matter of personal honour for the prelate.

Now that they were no more in need of the bishop's services, high parties at Ottawa were as bold in their denial of any formal promises of such a measure having been made as they had been prodigal of the same when he was considered the only

person able to quell the disturbances. In a petition to the Queen, dated February 8, 1872, Rev. Mr. Ritchot assured Her Majesty that a full amnesty had been promised him for all persons implicated in the late troubles, and his co-delegate of the Northwest people, Mr. Alfred A. Scott, confirmed that statement over his signature. This declaration was renewed under oath by the former in an affidavit made before a magistrate on November 19, 1873. The historian, Benjamin Sulte, who was Sir George Cartier's private secretary during the negotiations, in his sworn deposition (May 20, 1874), assured the Select Committee that such a promise had really been made to Mr. Ritchot in his own hearing.[10] The Hon. Mr. Royal swore that he had been told by Sir George to write to Riel that "the amnesty had been decided on," and that "the thing was done."[11] The archbishop himself was no less certain that he had personally received similar assurances. Yet nothing could avail. Orangeism was then rampant, and one of the ministers declared that "no government could stand five minutes if it took up that question, and that they were not bound to commit suicide."[12] So the Cabinet and even the Governor-General chose to deny what so many respectable parties swore to.

Inasmuch as they represented the people of Manitoba, the provincial authorities were less bigoted,

[10]Report of Select Committee, p. 181.
[11]*Ibid.*, p. 129.
[12]*Ibid.*, p. 88.

and at times a majority of their number were even Catholics. Thus, on July 3, 1874, the Clarke Government having resigned as an outcome of an adverse vote, the Hon. Mr. Girard was called upon to form a new administration. He therefore became Premier of Manitoba, with Mr. Jos. Dubuc as Attorney-General, and Mr. James McKay as President of the Council. The latter was also a Catholic, a generous friend of the archbishop, who had left Presbyterianism when twenty-nine years of age in order to join the Church. In conjunction with Messrs. J. A. N. Provencher, Charles Nolin and others, he had already rendered valuable services to the country while engaged in negotiating treaties with various bands of Indians.

But outside influences were at work in the province, which had sworn to wreak revenge on those who had shared in the execution of Scott. They could not lay hands on Riel; but Ambrose D. Lépine, who had shown himself one of the warmest supporters of Canada at the time of the Fenian scare, was arrested on September 27, 1873, and, in spite of a brilliant defence by Messrs. Dubuc, Girard and Royal, he was condemned to death (November 4, 1874). But at the earnest prayer of Archbishop Taché, his sentence was commuted to two years' imprisonment. On May 27th of the same year, the defender of the British flag, André Nault, was also arrested, while three days later Elzéar Lagimodière met with a similar fate. They were duly tried, but

the jury disagreed, and the partial amnesty, which was proclaimed April 23, 1875, stopped all further proceedings against them. Riel was by the same condemned to a five years' banishment.

The bishops of the Far North had not the intrigues or bad faith of the politicians to contend against. These were replaced by the reckless statements of the Protestant ministers. Nothing daunted by the failures of Séguin and Petitot, Mgr. Clut undertook in 1872 a long voyage to the Yukon and even the Pacific coast of Alaska. In the company of the Rev. Mr. Lecorre, a young priest who belonged as yet to the secular clergy, he left Providence on August 30th. From the start he experienced the ill-will of the Hudson's Bay Company, whose representative claimed there was no room for him in his boat—perhaps because some had been found for Mr. Bompas, who was to cross the Rocky Mountains by the same opportunity. Fortunately, Mr. Gaudet, a French Canadian Catholic, gave a canoe to the missionaries, who were thus enabled to repair to Fort Yukon. There they found Mr. F. Mercier in charge, with Messrs. Dufresne and Hanover, all good Catholics, who could not, however, undo what the adversaries of Catholicism had done by their calumnies. All through the Yukon, the ministers had assured the Indians that it was the Catholic priests who had put Jesus Christ to death, and that this was the reason for their foolish fondness for the crucifix. As this objection was being constantly raised against

their preaching, Mr. Lecorre publicly asked Mr. Bompas whether he was really the author of the accusation, as all the natives assured him was the case. The minister denied it; but when cornered by the young priest, he declined to tell the Indians in their own language that those who made such a charge were not telling the truth. Whereupon, after remarks on the Blessed Virgin and the saints, as well as the respect due to the emblem of our redemption, Mr. Bompas was left by his indignant interlocutor in a state of mind which was far from comfortable.[13]

Some time after that controversial bout, it was rumoured that, uneasy after his castigation at Fort Yukon, Mr. Bompas intended to descend in the spring (1873) to an important place called Newklukayet. To forestall him the bishop went down himself and was the first Catholic missionary to enter Alaska. His visit was not entirely fruitless, but he soon realized that even there the natives had been prejudiced against his ministry.

On May 23rd, about one hundred and thirty Tanánas, "the least civilized Indians" the bishop had ever seen, arrived, all in leather garments and bedecked with beads, porcupine quills and dirt. They landed to the accompaniment of special aboriginal ceremonies, wherein chants and dances were chiefly conspicuous. Alas! even these genuine savages had three times seen a Protestant minister!

On June 4th, Mgr. Clut left for St. Michael's, on

[13] *Missions*, vol. XIII., p. 290.

INTERIOR OF CHURCH AT FORT GOOD HOPE

an island of the Pacific, and on July 7th he bade farewell to the coast, bound for the Mackenzie, leaving on the way Mr. Lecorre at Nulatto. It was his intention to establish permanent posts along the great Alaskan river; but a closer study of official documents led to the conviction that the former Russian possessions in America were under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of Vancouver Island.

On September 6, 1873, Mgr. Clut arrived at Good Hope, and on October 9th he was again in sight of his house at Providence. A little incident will tell of the difficulties of communication with the civilized world in that northwest corner of America. On January 30, 1873, Father Petitot received at Good Hope a letter from the agent of the commercial firm of Hutchinson, Kohl & Co., which was an answer to a communication dated June, 1870.

CHAPTER XXVII.

TRAGIC DEATHS.

1874-1875.

Side by side with the question of the amnesty, and long after this had been settled, the question of Catholic colonization was uppermost in the thoughts of Archbishop Taché. With the opening of his adopted country to the overwhelming streams of settlers from various parts of the world, he understood that, unless special efforts were made to bring in Catholics from the east and the United States, his flock would soon be swamped by a wave of immigration which would preclude those common religious or national interests so necessary to a homogeneous society. It was even then difficult to obtain the rights of his people: what would it be when they would have become an insignificant minority in their own land?

Immediately after the incorporation of Manitoba within the Confederation of Canada, there were in the new province 5,452 Catholics, against 4,841 Protestants—the religion of 1,935 could not be ascertained. But very soon this numerical majority of Taché's co-religionists was a thing of the past, and though at first their representation in the local legislature was as large as that of the non-Catholics, the

proportion of Catholics to Protestants in the country was to decrease every year.

It cannot be denied that had the extreme gravity of the question been fully grasped in the east, thousands who yearly repaired to the manufactories of New England in search of some sort of betterment in their condition, at the risk of sinking therein their nationality and, at times, even their faith, would have emigrated to the Canadian West, and powerfully assisted in maintaining the influence of Catholics there. This emigration would have rendered impossible the spoliation of their rights which was to darken the last years of the patriotic archbishop.

Thanks to his exertions, however, a current of Catholic immigration, French for the most part and, alas! but too weak, brought a few hundreds of settlers to the western plains, which resulted in the formation of new centres of Catholic activity. Thus was founded in 1872 the parish of Ste. Agathe, which was first granted a resident priest (1873) in the person of Rev. Jean-Baptiste Proulx. Arrived in Manitoba in the course of 1870, that gentleman was to return to Quebec in 1874. In 1873 another new post received the visit of a priest. This was Our Lady of Lorette, near Ste. Anne des Chênes, where Rev. David Joseph Fillion (arrived September 22, 1874), made his first appearance on the first of November of that year. On the departure of Mr. Proulx, Fillion became parish priest of Ste. Agathe (October, 1874), and on the following sixth of January Rev.

Cyrille Samoisette was ordained with a view to becoming the assistant of that valiant priest in his work of organizing new parishes.

Nearer home, a regular city was springing up which, though Protestant in the majority of its inhabitants, claimed none the less the attention of the Church, on account of its commanding position and the importance to which it was destined. Every reader has already named Winnipeg, which in 1874 had risen from a hamlet of less than a hundred souls, its population in 1869, to a town of almost 5,000.

Rev. Jean-Baptiste Baudin, O.M.I., on his arrival (September, 1872), from the eastern States, replaced Father McCarthy in the charge of the Catholics of the new capital of the Middle West. In 1873 the convent chapel was already much too small. In the spring of the following year a building was put up on a piece of land given by the Hudson's Bay Company which combined the advantages of a church with those of a presbytery. The latter was on the first floor and the former occupied the second. At the same time, the place became a regular residence of the Oblates, with Father Lacombe as superior and Father Baudin as parish priest.

This building was blessed by the archbishop on May 30, 1874, in presence of a large concourse of the faithful. An eloquent sermon was preached by Rev. Father Th. Lavoie, then at the head of St. Boniface College, assisted by three professors. Among the congregation the old-timers could remark the cos-

tume of a new teaching Order of nuns, whom Father Lacombe had just brought (July 22nd), from Montreal. These were the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, who henceforth took the place of the Grey Nuns at St. Mary's Academy, and have ever since met with such uniform success at Winnipeg, St. Boniface and elsewhere. The first representatives of the new Institute in the Middle West were Sisters Cadieux, Duhamel, Lynch and Nault. The archdiocese of St. Boniface counted already not less than eighteen Catholic schools.

As if to show that the missionaries were the disciples of the "God of sciences" as well as the preachers of Christ crucified, two of them were just taking an honourable place among the philologists of the time. We have had occasion to mention several books published in the native languages for the benefit of the natives themselves. This time the works issued were intended for their pastors and for scientists at large. They consisted, in the first place, of a Grammar and Dictionary of the Cree language, a work of XX—894 pages, due to the persevering labours of Father Lacombe and published mostly at the expense of the Federal Government.

It had barely appeared when another missionary, endowed with a remarkable scientific turn of mind, Father Petitot, passed through Canada on his way to France, where he published the following year (1875) a Grammar and Dictionary of three Déné dialects LXXXV—367 folio pages with verbal para-

digms on folding leaves; an Eskimo Vocabulary and afferent Grammatical Notes; a most learned and well-written account of the geography of northern Canada, together with several monographs on its aborigines, bristling with valuable information, all of which were recognized by the French Government and divers learned societies. At the first International Congress of Americanists held in Nancy (September, 1875), the erudite author of these works played easily the most important rôle, and went a long way to convince the cabinet savants that thenceforth the last work on American ethnological matters belonged to the missionaries.

A meeting of a very different nature, the General Chapter of the Oblates, had assembled in France the representatives of the western missions (1873). They did not return alone. It is to the displacements occasioned by its sessions that we trace the acquisition of several new missionaries: Father Doucet, destined for the missions of Athabasca-Mackenzie; Father Hugonard, who was to have such a long career as educator of the Indians in the archdiocese of St. Boniface; and, accompanying Bishop Grandin, Fathers Brunet and Bonnald; while two scholastics remained in eastern Canada to complete their studies, after which they became respectively Father Henri Grandin (a nephew of the prelate of the same name), and Father Dauphin. Six lay brothers, professed or novices, belonged likewise to the bishop's party.

This was in 1874. The preceding year another ecclesiastic had been ordained who had come as early as 1870 with Bishop Clut; we mean Father Albert Pascal, whom we shall have occasion to mention honourably in connection with the establishment of a new division in the northern missions.

We have also named Father Bonnald. That young priest had scarcely reached his destination, St. Albert, when he came in contact with a striking instance of the dangers that beset the wayfarer in the western solitudes. In the service of the mission was a devoted French Canadian, Louis Dazé by name, who, for perhaps a score of years, was assisting the missionaries without any other remuneration than the sense of good done for the love of God. By the middle of November, 1874, he accompanied a priest for whom he, one day, set out on a buffalo hunting expedition some distance from an Indian camp, where the said missionary was exercising his ministry. One of those terrible snowstorms against which there is no protection outside of habitations on the Canadian plains, arose shortly after. When seen again the devoted layman was frozen stiff, after having walked five or six days, without eating, in the teeth of the gale. He was but five minutes' walk from an Indian camp which his failing strength did not allow him to reach. The missionaries mourned him as one might a brother.

This untimely end followed by one year a sudden death which was even more deplorable and was at

the same time the prelude of a third of a still more tragic nature. We have had many occasions to mention Father Eynard, of the northern missions. His had been a rather checkered career. Born at Genoa, May 21, 1824, of parents hailing from the south of France, he made his classical studies at the Lesser Seminary of Embrun and finished them up in the local University College, where he graduated with high honours. He then entered the famous Polytechnic School of Paris, after which he was admitted into the French Administration of Rivers and Forests.

His passage at the last mentioned institution had caused a complete eclipse of his faith, which ended, when Mr. Eynard was still an official of the French Government, in an irrevocable return to God. His fervour in the fulfilment of his religious duties was so great and his practice of the Christian virtues so remarkable, that he ultimately left the world for the ecclesiastical state, and then for the still more perfect life of a missionary bound by vows of religion. These he pronounced in the Congregation of the Oblates on November 1, 1854. May 24, 1855, he was ordained a priest. We know something of his career among the natives of America.

After a long sojourn at Great Slave Lake, at Providence and at St. Michael's, Bishop Faraud had called him to the Nativity, on Lake Athabasca, to replace his own coadjutor, Mgr. Clut. Pursued by insomnia, Father Eynard used to get up very early,

make his daily religious exercises and have a walk in front of the chapel until he should wake up his companions, Father Laity and Brother Reynier. On August 6, 1873, instead of his usual walk, he took a bath in the lake. As he was not seen at the altar at his regular hour, a search was instituted which resulted in his being found with his arms crossed over his breast under six feet of water, but three yards from the shore!

Poor Father Eynard was so kind, so timid, and so exemplary in his whole conduct that everybody felt as if he had sustained a personal loss by his unexpected demise.

More tragical still was the end of a good worker in an humbler field, which saddened the Vicariate-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie in the summer of 1875. Brother Alexis is no stranger to our readers. Without being naturally skilled, he was the factotum of the northern missions. He boasted no diploma from a polytechnic school, yet was ever ready to act as an engineer, opening up new roads, preparing and directing freight or other expeditions between the different missionary stations. Bishop Faraud was expected at Lac la Biche with a large caravan of new missionaries on his return from the General Chapter of the Oblates. Brother Alexis was then at Lake Athabasca; he was sent by Mgr. Clut with a party of halfbreeds to place himself at the disposal of his bishop. After two weeks' navigation up the Athabasca River, the summer freshets rendered

further progress impossible, and the brother's companions fell back upon a trading post (Fort McMurray) they had passed a few days before. But, prompted by his courage and a sense of duty based on the orders given him, the devoted religious resolved to go on by land with his guide, an Iroquois halfbreed, and an orphan girl he was returning to the sisters of Lac la Biche.

His new route precluded the possibility of carrying a sufficient amount of provisions. Hence he had to count on chance game, which is too often the rarer as it is more needed. The little party had before them a trip of twenty days' duration, but they could take provisions for only four.

A halfbreed is seldom in a hurry to move from a good place. The erstwhile companions of Brother Alexis enjoyed their stay at the fort, and departed only when the water of the river had considerably receded. Great was the consternation of everybody when neither brother nor Iroquois were found at Lac la Biche. Fearing the worst, Father Leduc, in charge of that place since October 16, 1874, immediately dispatched two men on horseback, who returned at the end of twelve days. They had indeed found the good brother, but he was under a layer of sand at the mouth of House River. Of his guide, not a trace; but instead, the most horrible suspicions.

Frantic with grief and bound to ascertain as much as he could of his fate, the superior of Lac la Biche then sent Brother Lambert with some men to bring

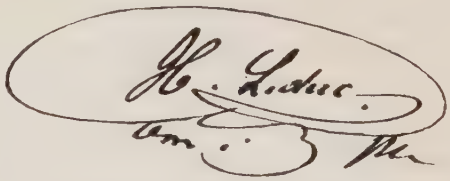
the remains for interment. Surmises then became sad realities. The brother and his companions found nothing but dried up bones evidently deposited by some unknown hand in a shallow hole. Near-by was an axe, still besmeared with blood. The head of the hapless wayfarer was perforated from side to side. No doubt was possible: poor Alexis had fallen a victim to his Iroquois companion.

But, worse still, a few yards therefrom was an old fireplace with the remnants of a gruesome repast: a human vertebra and fragments of a man's ribs! A shoulder-blade was missing; it was afterwards found at a point distant a day's journey from the scene of the crime, a clear evidence that the wretched cannibal had carried along with him portions of his victim's body as one does venison procured in the chase.

Neither Iroquois nor Indian girl was ever seen afterwards. But, with the keen scent of sleuth-hounds which characterizes all halfbreeds, the veil which concealed the guide's doings was soon lifted. From the particularities of the camping places discovered, the footprints in the ground and other minor details, it was ascertained that the Iroquois had appropriated the girl, and that the representations of the brother on such conduct had only accelerated his death. So that, horrible as his end may seem, there is a strong probability that it was withal that of a martyr to chastity.

Brother Alexis Reynard was born September 28,

1828, at Castillon, diocese of Nimes, France. He made his perpetual vows in the Order of the Oblates on May 9, 1852, and he met his end in the first days of July, 1875.



FATHER LEDUC'S SIGNATURE.

On the following 3rd of September, there arrived at Lac la Biche a new Oblate missionary, Father Auguste Husson, accompanied by two future lay brothers, one of whom, named Thouminet, was to become the victim of a drowning accident at Fort Dunnegan, on Peace River. Two others of his companions were Messrs. Le Serrec and Dupire, a deacon and a subdeacon respectively, who soon after likewise entered the Congregation of the Oblates, and, in common with the head of their caravan, yielded splendid services to the cause of religion and civilization just east of the Rocky Mountains. In this they were only to follow the traditions of their predecessors in the country, as is gathered from this passage from a book by a traveller who passed through it in 1872. The mission referred to is that of St. Bernard's, on Lesser Slave Lake.

"The Roman Catholic missionaries have here a representative, a Mr. Remon [Father Rémas] who,

like his confrères, has sacrificed the advantages of civilized society to devote himself to the conversion of the Indians. This gentleman has built to himself a log shanty, which answers the double purpose of chapel and dwelling-house, and also serves as a school for the few native children at the place. He invited us to tea, and served us up a plentiful repast of third quality pemmican and tea, without the concomitants of sugar and cream. Indeed, from what the old gentleman remarked, I fear his superiors at Lac la Biche were a little remiss in supplying him with the actual necessaries of life, as his stock of provisions was exhausted. He told me he had not tasted flour for six months, so I, in return, asked him to our camp, where we treated him to the unusual luxury of fresh bread. He was very communicative, and gave me a letter of introduction to his confrère of Dunvegan, Monsieur Tissier.

"The society which furnishes the North-West Territory of Canada with missionaries of the Roman Catholic persuasion is an extraordinary one, and deserves, *en passant,* a tribute of respect and admiration for the self-sacrificing zeal, self-denial and pluck with which each and every member, from their bishops down to the humblest lay brothers, prosecute the work of Christianization. They are bound by a vow of poverty, and they certainly carry it out to perfection, for they possess nothing but the clothes they actually stand in."[1]

[1] "Canada on the Pacific," by Charles Horetzky, pp. 26, 27. Montreal. 1874.

It is pleasing occasionally to come across Protestant ministers who, not only are not blind to the good wrought by rivals in the missionary field, even though they may be of the "Romish" persuasion, but have the courage to give expression to their convictions on that score. The Rev. George M. Grant, a Presbyterian minister of Kingston, in a work entitled "Ocean to Ocean," thus pays his respects to the Catholic institutions and missionaries within the same region:

"We called on Bishop Grandin and found him at home, with six or seven of his clergy who fortunately happened to be in from various missions. The bishop is from old France. The majority of the priests, and all the sisters, are French Canadians.[2] The bishop and his staff received us with a hearty welcome, showed us around the church, the school, the garden, and introduced us to the sisters. The church represents an extraordinary amount of labour and ingenuity, when it is considered that there is not a saw-mill in the country,[3] and that every plank had to be made with a whip or hand-saw. The altar is a beautiful piece of the early Norman style, executed as a labour of love by two of the fathers. The sacristy behind was the original log church and is still used for service in the winter."[4]

[2]In this Dr. Grant is mistaken. Father Lacombe alone was a French-Canadian.

[3]Very soon afterwards the machinery of one was added to the little grist-mill already existing at the mission of Lac la Biche.

[4]"Ocean to Ocean," by Rev. G. M. Grant, pp. 189, 190. London, 1877.

Dr. Grant then goes on to relate the origin and growth of St. Albert, mentioning especially the visitation of smallpox which carried off three hundred persons in that place alone. "Men and women fled from their nearest and dearest," he says, but "the priests and the sisters toiled with that devotedness that is a matter of course with them; nursed the sick, shrived the dying, and gathered many of the orphans into their home. The scourge passed away, but the infant settlement had received a severe blow from which it is only beginning to recover. Many are the discouragements, material and moral, of the fathers in their labours."[5]

Of the orphanage proper he says: "They have twenty-four children in it, chiefly girls, two-thirds of the number halfbreeds, the rest Blackfeet or Crees who have been picked up in tents beside their dead parents, abandoned by the tribe when stricken with smallpox."[6]

No less appreciated were Mgr. Taché's own labours. On June 24, 1875, was celebrated at St. Boniface the twenty-fifth anniversary of his episcopal consecration, and the occasion was eagerly seized upon by all the classes of society to shower on the prelate congratulations and presents. Among the latter the most valuable was, no doubt, a fine pipe organ for the cathedral offered by his innumerable friends in the province of Quebec. Mr. Geo. Dugas,

[5] *Ibid., ibid.*
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 191.

the parish priest of St. Boniface since 1870, had contributed not a little towards procuring the same by his active canvassing for subscriptions in the city of Montreal. Very Rev. Father Antoine, Oblate provincial for eastern Canada, preached on that day a splendid sermon of an historical character.

The Catholic (French) representation in the local parliament had by this time fallen from twelve to ten, and it is safe to assert that the decrease in the number of their constituents was much greater. On the other hand, the Bureau of Education, which controlled the expenditures for school purposes, in conformity with an educational law which gave satisfaction to all parties, except anti-Catholic bigots, then counted only nine Catholic members out of a total of twenty-one. These growing inequalities struck the archbishop as ominous, and he renewed his efforts on behalf of Catholic immigration. His exertions, personal and through the instrumentality of Father Lacombe, were not entirely useless. They soon led to the formation of the parishes of St. Pierre and St. Jean-Baptiste, respectively fifteen and twenty-three miles from Ste. Agathe, though, as a matter of fact, halfbreeds from older centres were the real pioneers of those localities.

It seems as if any considerable arrivals from the east or the United States were bound to occasion corresponding displacements in the ranks of the first occupants of the soil, who yielded their places to the newcomers to seek out the fresh air of the Mani-

toban plains, when they did not emigrate as far north as the valley of the Saskatchewan.

By this time (1875) the parish of St. Mary's, in Winnipeg, had become the most flourishing, if not the most populous of the whole archdiocese, counting about one thousand Catholics out of a population of seven thousand with which the young capital was then credited. So far, practically all the missions being in the hands of the Oblates, no special provision had been made to secure those religious in the possession of any property. With the rapidly changing order of things, it was felt that some equitable repartition of the different posts from a financial standpoint must be made. In consequence, St. Mary's was formally allotted to the Oblate Order, and, under date May 3, 1875, the Superior-General constituted it the chief house of his missionaries in Central Canada, with St. Charles, St. Laurent and St. Florent (or Qu'Appelle) as dependencies.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PROGRESS IN THE SOUTH AND THE NORTHWEST.
1876-1880.

In the course of 1876 the halfbreeds of St. Charles received in the person of Rev. Damase Dandurand the very first Canadian who ever became an Oblate. After years spent in the honourable position of vicar-general of Mgr. Guigues, Bishop of Ottawa, that priest had arrived in Winnipeg, August 28th of the preceding year.

At the same time, St. Laurent, on Lake Manitoba, was under the direction of Father Camper, assisted by Father Saint-Germain, the former having succeeded Father Simonet, who had been in charge since 1870. By dint of persevering efforts, the hearts of the obdurate Sauteux, the murderers of Mr. Darveau and their children, had finally been conquered. When Camper first reached St. Laurent, in 1866, the place counted only thirteen Catholic families; ten years later, it boasted thirty-two, with a school under Bro. Mulvihil and fifty pupils. From the mission proper several points were attended by the missionaries along Lakes Manitoba, Winnipegosis and Swan, which occasioned frequent outings and considerable exertions.

As to St. Florent, or Qu'Appelle, it was then un-

der the management of Father Decorby, assisted by Father Hugonard, while Father Gasté directed the fortunes of the lonely post on Lake Caribou, with Father Bonnald and Bro. Guillet as companions. Father Bonnald had arrived there in the summer of 1876, and, endowed with an untiring energy and a zeal that knew no bounds, he immediately set upon learning Cree and awakening heathen and Protestant to a sense of their shortcomings. Outposts were being created around the main centre, chief among which was that of the Sacred Heart, on Lake Pelican, the special field of labour of the new missionary.

Not far from the dreary shores of Lake Caribou extend the famous Barren Grounds of Canada, the most desolate region under the sun, perhaps not even excepting the desert of Sahara. None but aborigines can venture thither, and even they do not make their homes in those frozen and absolutely treelees wastes; but several adjoining tribes, prominent among which is that of the Caribou-Eaters, periodically hunt there in search of reindeer or caribou, and occasionally musk-ox, for which those lonely deserts are famed. So far the Caribou-Eaters had been much more absorbed with the quest after their material food than impressed with a sense of their spiritual requirements. Under the care of Father Moulin, whom we also find at Lake Caribou about this time, an appreciable improvement was noticeable in their conduct. In the beginning of July, 1877, another missionary, Father Paquette, likewise

proffered his services to the priests who battled in that part of Canada against heathenism and Protestantism.

Just in the opposite corner of the Middle West, a new post was being established, which was eventually to develop into the promising city of Calgary. In the fall of 1875 the Federal Government, desirous of safeguarding against the possible hostility of the Blackfeet the lives of the settlers it was directing to the west, had commenced a military post on the Bow River under the leadership of Capt. Brisebois. The barracks were erected on the very spot where Fort La Jonquière had stood, and the establishment was now called Fort Brisebois. In the course of the following year, Col. McLeod changed that name into that of Calgary, after a castle in Mull, belonging to the McLeod family, and said to mean clear water.

The Oblates had likewise started a station some twenty miles therefrom. Realizing the importance which the military post was likely to assume, they transported themselves to its immediate vicinity, forming, through the instrumentality of Father Doucet, the embryo of a new mission, which they put under the patronage of Our Lady of Peace.

This was in 1876. Even at that early date there was some white population clustered near the fort, but it was almost totally Protestant. Soon, however, French halfbreeds commenced to congregate there, not always for the good of their morals. But as late as December 25, 1876, the prospective

mission had as yet neither church nor chapel, the services being held in a private house, though thenceforth the place constantly enjoyed the ministrations of religion.

In the Far North, the chief missionary station was that of Providence. It comprised in 1876, a Bishop's House, the official residence of Mgr. Clut, with Father Lecorre, an Oblate since September 10th of the same year; Father Le Doussal, a secular priest then making his novitiate; Bro. Lecomte, a scholastic awaiting ordination, and the lay brothers Salasse, the great blacksmith and machinist of all the northern missions; Boisramé, the carpenter and engineer of the same, and Renault, the local farmer. With the help of such devoted hands, that post was now as prosperous from a material standpoint as could be expected under such high latitude. The summer of 1875 had witnessed the installation of a little grist-mill for barley; but this was not yet in working order by the end of 1876. Hence the tedious process of hand grinding had still to be resorted to.

By the side of the Bishop's House, and of even more pretentious proportions, was the convent, with an orphanage whose good work was recognized by Protestants and Catholics alike. That very year (1876) Mr. Richard Hardisty, one of the fur-trading magnates of the north and a non-Catholic, donated $10.00 towards its maintainance.[1] Those charitable institutions were appreciated everywhere, and, not

[1]Mr. Hardisty died a Senator.

long before, Mr. W. Christie, another Hudson's Bay Company man and a great friend of the missionaries, had proved even more generous towards the orphanage of Ile à la Crosse. Commencement exercises were held in his honour in English and French, accompanied by songs and recitations in both languages delivered by native urchins who, if not taken up by the good sisters, would have been wallowing in the mire or the slaves of perhaps some selfish relatives. So satisfied was that gentleman with what he saw and heard that he did not leave before presenting the sum of $25.00 to the institution.

Quite as great was the appreciation elicited from Protestants by the orphanage of St. Albert. It is even on record that a Protestant clergyman contributed towards its support.

Unfortunately spiritual conditions in the posts depending from the Providence mission did not seem so bright. That part of the country was now overrun by the agents of Protestantism, usually schoolmasters stationed at the different posts, third-rate men who were dangerous to the faith of the credulous Indians in proportion to their ignorance of the religious creed they had the mission to discredit and combat by all possible means. Yet their most formidable weapons were the goods put at their disposal to win over the natives to their cause. At Fort Rae and Peel River, the Dog-Ribs and the Loucheux, by dint of hearing attacks on their pastors and ridicule cast on their religious practices,

were becoming indifferent. Great indeed were the exertions of the missionaries; but they did not enjoy the gift of ubiquity. Father Gascon was now wearing out, and the new priests were unfamiliar with the native dialects.

In June of the same year we find Mgr. Clut at Hay River, where he meets Bompas, now an Anglican bishop and a benedict, and practically sees him baptize a child in spite of its mother. "Attending that post are three chiefs, all polygamous, and *therefore* Protestant," avers Father Lecorre, who is himself responsible for the italics.[2] The same Protestant dignitary then fixed his residence at Athabasca, where Father Ducot watched over the Catholic interests. Bompas had with him a former schoolmaster, a halfbreed promoted to such orders as were in the giving of his Church. He was sent to Peace River, to the great chagrin of the priests who had nobody to oppose him.

At the eastern end of Lake Athabasca, or Fond du Lac, was the mission of Our Lady of the Seven Dolours, frequented by the nomads of the great Barren Grounds and others. Father Pascal was in charge, while Father de Kérangué, a Breton nobleman, had for his share the care of Fort des Liards and its mountaineer Indians.

Coming south, we find in 1876 Bishop Grandin always on the move, and ably seconded in the direction of his diocese by Father Leduc. This was now

[2] *Missions des Oblats de Marie Immaculée*, vol. XVI., p. 374.

entering upon a new phase in its existence: little by little emigration was making itself felt, especially in the valley of the Saskatchewan, where some whites and many halfbreeds were gradually settling. Hence, little groups which were soon to require the ministrations of priests, if the newcomers were not to be left to the tender mercies of the preachers borne on top the wave of emigration, which was as yet but the distant counterpart of that which was now changing the face of Manitoba.

These anti-Catholic ministers were but too ready to challenge the French halfbreeds to a discussion of religious topics, feeling sure of an easy victory because of the generally unlettered character of their adversaries; but they had occasionally to retire from the battlefield with the unavowed persuasion that plain common sense is at times worth at least a smattering of theological knowledge. As the hatred for the Blessed Virgin has ever been a safe criterion of heresy, their attacks had quite often for a theme the veneration rendered her by the Church.

"You pray to Mary as you would to God," said one of them to a halfbreed, "and yet she was nothing but a common woman like those in this fort."

"Is that so?" naively queried his interlocutor. "Then will you please name me one of them who is the mother of God?"

Another day, a minister was inveighing against what he termed the ridiculous practice of penance recommended by the Church, remarking at the same

time that this was perfectly superfluous, since Christ Himself had done penance for us.

"Well," slyly put in an unsophisticated halfbreed, "did not Jesus Christ die for us?"

"Assuredly."

"Then we should not die."

We now have to notice in the front rank of Grandin's missionaries the same Father Lestanc whom the visitation of smallpox at Qu'Appelle, in the first place, and then his knowledge of the Indian languages had gradually drawn to the Northwest, though as late as 1873 we find him momentarily at St. Boniface. The mission established for the benefit of the nomadic Crees of the western plains had necessarily suffered by the withdrawal of Father Lacombe to Winnipeg. Father Lestanc asked himself to be entrusted with it. Accordingly, in the fall of 1877 he founded a station at Fort Pitt, to be used as a basis for apostolic sorties among the Crees. Shortly thereafter, in spite of the fact that a Protestant mission had also been started at the same place, he wrote from among his nomads: "I have already administered over fifty baptisms, of children and adults. My presence on the prairie has a good effect among the Crees, and already I have visited the camps of Kigerwin and of Paskiakwiyin, which seem to live again after a long sleep. I possess nothing, and, thank God, I need nothing."[3]

He then had a young priest named Fafard as an

[3] *Missions*, vol. XVI., p. 467.

efficient aid in his good work. By order of Bishop Grandin, Lestanc visited also Battleford, then the capital of the Northwest Territories, where he met jovial Père André just arrived, and Governor David Laird, who treated the priests with the utmost courtesy. There he likewise came in contact with a large camp of Crees and four preachers who had not much to do, as the majority of the Indians were Catholics. For the lack of a building large enough to accommodate so many people, he had to daily visit them in their tepees and remind them of their religious obligations.

At Fort Pitt Father Fafard had in the meantime busied himself with the construction of a house, and was now even starting a school. From the inception of the mission to January 11, 1878, the two priests had made sixty-two baptisms, blessed eight marriages, and received two abjurations.

The 13th of September, 1877, was a red-letter day in the annals of the western plains Indians. On that date, accompanied by two hundred militiamen, the Hon. Mr. Laird arrived at Fort McLeod to conclude a treaty whereby the Blackfeet and other allied tribes, with a few Crees, ceded their rights to the land in consideration of periodical rations and a reserve five miles by a hundred and fifty. A Catholic priest was there to help the authorities in their arduous task, but one whose absence elicited genuine regret was Father Lacombe. The devoted missionary was in eastern Canada, working in the

interests of Catholic colonization on the western plains, when he was officially requested (July 19, 1877) by the Secretary of State to attend that important meeting. Pursuant to that invitation, Lacombe had indeed left for the Far West, but illness had detained him at St. Paul.

This brings us to the consideration of the efforts made by the religious authorities on behalf of Catholic immigration to Manitoba. Archbishop Taché had obtained the nomination as agent for that meritorious work of a lawyer named Charles Lalime. In conjunction with Father Lacombe that gentleman secured the arrival, in May, 1876, of one hundred and five settlers from the United States. During that same year, Lacombe procured altogether for the incipient parishes of Manitoba no less than five hundred new colonists, all French Canadians. As an outcome of his success, he was again deputed to the east at the end of January, 1877. He then outdid even himself. From May to the end of July of that year, six hundred more Catholics came, through his exertions, to swell the ranks of their brethren on the plains of the Middle West.

This influx of French Canadians was all the more welcome as many of the Catholic halfbreeds were then migrating north, to the great annoyance of their best friend on earth, Mgr. Taché. It allowed also of the founding of new parishes and of the consolidation of those already existing. By an archiepiscopal decree dated January 5, 1877, the parishes

of St. Jean-Baptiste, St. Joseph and St. Pie had already been canonically erected. Mr. Fillion was named to the first, and shortly afterwards Mgr. Taché gave him an assistant, Rev. Michel Charbonneau, who became the following year the victim of Orange brutality.[4] Mr. Fillion had at the same time the care of the two other new parishes, which, together with St. Jean-Baptiste and other minor centres, became immediately the homes of the new settlers. Thenceforth Mgr. Taché took it upon himself to visit them regularly.

Another visitation which it behooves us to chronicle is that of Very Rev. Father Soullier, delegated by the General of the Oblates (June-July, 1876), to his confrères in Manitoba, a visitation which was but the forerunner of a more solemn one which that eminent religious was later on to make to the same apostolic field after he had himself been elected to the highest office in his Order.

Archbishop Taché had always expected that his college would ultimately pass into the hands of his own religious family. The visit of Father Soullier having convinced him that the lack of the proper personnel made this an impossibility, Rev. Mr.

[4]As an outcome of a political election, two men from Morris attempted to invade the home of Rev. Mr. Fillion, where they suspected a man on whom they had to serve a summons had retired. Fillion, who was a powerful man, prevented them from searching his premises, whereupon they returned to Morris, but soon after came back in force. The man they wanted was not there, but they revenged themselves by forcibly removing Mr. Charbonneau, who had absolutely nothing to do with the case, and so ill-treated him that he was afterwards sick for a long period of time.

Forget-Despatis was entrusted with its direction along with other ecclesiastics, and Father Lavoie, O.M.I., who had been at its head for the last eight years, received his obedience for St. Mary's, Winnipeg.

This same college had become, early in 1877, a component part of the University of Manitoba, together with those of St. John and of Manitoba, representing respectively Anglican and Presbyterian interests. The university was, as it should ever be, a confederation of colleges, and the latter only had a right to teach, according to the religious views of the population for which they had been established. The result was an ideal university, recalling the origins of similar institutions in Europe. The persons named by the College of St. Boniface—the oldest of the three—for the first University Council were: His Grace Archbishop Taché, Revs. Lavoie, G. Dugas and Forget-Despatis, with Messrs. J. Dubuc, J. N. A. Provencher and E. W. Jarvis, B.A. Mr. J. Royal became at the same time vice-chancellor of the University.

Another institution which dates its origin from the same time (1877) is the now famous hospital of St. Boniface. So far, the Grey Nuns had nursed the sick in their own convent. On July 29th, the archbishop blessed a modest building, erected exclusively for the care of the sick, on a piece of land just facing the mouth of the Assiniboine.

Shortly thereafter (August 6th), there arrived at

Winnipeg he who was undoubtedly the most illustrious of all the Governors-General of Canada, Lord Dufferin. He visited with evident interest the various institutions of St. Boniface, and the extreme sympathy manifested by his reply to Mgr. Taché's address of welcome was especially noted. His Excellency's visit was the occasion of a little performance which was the death-knell of the old order of things and the ushering in of the new. On September 29, 1877, in presence of Lieutenant-Governor Alexander Morris, and Hon. Messrs. Girard, Royal, Dubuc and many other notabilities, he drove in, at St. Boniface, the first spike of the rails that were to unite Manitoba to the United States. On October 9th following, the first railway engine seen in that province arrived on the steamer *Selkirk,* and the famous bells of St. Boniface greeted its appearance as they had previously done for the arrival of the first steamboat that came down the Red.

From a political standpoint 1877 closed with a strong ray of hope for the Catholic interests in Manitoba. The Hon. Mr. Joseph Cauchon had just been named Lieut.-Governor of that country (October 2nd), and of four Crown Ministers, two, Messrs. Girard and Larivière, were Catholics, while Mr. Dubuc, the speaker of the Legislative Assembly, was also of the same persuasion. These were indeed halcyon days for Church and State in the Middle West!

The following year, the religious circles of Mani-

toba were enlarged by the arrival of Rev. Alphonse A. Cherrier, accompanied by four seminarists, and Father Gladu, O.M.I., with Bro. Madore, an Oblate scholastic. Cherrier, who was to furnish a long and honourable career in the west, replaced Mr. G. Dugas as pastor of St. Boniface; Father Gladu was named professor in the college along with nine others, under Mr. Forget-Despatis. From this number of teachers we are warranted in surmising that this was now a well-equipped institution. The roll of pupils counted about one hundred and fifty names.

SIGNATURE OF GOVERNOR CAUCHON.

Just then some annoyance was caused the archbishop by an ordinance of the Governor of the Northwest Territories concerning the right of dispensation from the bans of marriage which was practically denied the Catholic bishops, who had always exercised it whenever required by circumstances. Mgr. Taché protested, and, at his invitation, Bishop Grandin joined his voice to that of his metropolitan. Verbal explanations ensued, which were given to Father Lestanc, then stationed at Battleford, with a view to having them transmitted to his Ordinary. These made it clear that the obnoxious Act had been adopted in good faith.

The government of the Territories was certainly

not hostile to the Catholic Church, as was proved by the fact that, in 1877, it had granted $300 towards the support of the bi-lingual school of St. Albert. Near Fort Carlton, a centre of French halfbreeds known to the religious authorities as St. Laurent was now given the official name of Grandin. The best of relations then existed between people of all denominations on the plains of the Saskatchewan. Thus hail having destroyed the crops of the St. Albert settlers, a meeting took place which elected a committee of seven, of whom only one was a Catholic, namely, Bishop Grandin. Among the six Protestants there was an Anglican bishop and three ministers. The Protestant prelate spoke highly of the charitable institutions under Mgr. Grandin. The provisions of the latter's orphanage had dwindled down to twenty or thirty pounds of barley flour: thanks to the intervention of that committee, 4,000 pounds were granted it by the Government of the Northwest Territories.

The same officials were then keeping on their work of settling matters with the original inhabitants of the country. Thus they concluded another treaty with a band of Indians who congregated for the occasion at a place called Sounding Lake. The solemn transaction occurred, August 5, 1878, in presence of Fathers André and Fafard. The following Sunday, mass was celebrated before an immense concourse of people, among whom was Gov. Laird, who seemed agreeably surprised at what he

saw. A Protestant clergyman who happened to be there had also his service: just one Indian was with his congregation.

Whether attracted by the generosity of the Canadian Government or repelled by the duplicity of the American authorities, not less than ten thousand Sioux then migrated from the United States to the diocese of St. Albert. They were hospitably received. Fathers André and Fourmond, then (1879) of St. Laurent, near Carlton, attempted to do something for their souls, with what results may be surmised from the fact that neither of them understood the dialect of the newcomers. Nevertheless, by means of signs, the exhibition of religious emblems and the mimicking of Catholic practices, quite a few were made to understand that in their new country some there were who, in course of time, could continue the good work commenced by priests on American soil.

But even had Grandin's missionaries chosen to ignore the Sioux, they would have been far from idle. In a letter to his Superior-General Father Leduc thus sums up their achievements and situation by June, 1878: "Nine new establishments[5] have been started within the last two years; more numerous conversions of heathens; a consoling number of abjurations; a Government definitively installed among us; more easy communications; many half-

[5]Lac Lanonne, St. Laurent of Grandin, Prince Albert, Battleford, Duck Lake, Forts Pitt and McLeod, Our Lady of Peace, and St. Joseph of Cumberland.

breeds abandoning their nomadic life and settling down on land; an already large number of Indians fixed on reserves given them by the Government and asking for a Catholic priest. Five of your children travelling the whole summer over the immense deserts of the west to carry the Glad Tidings to the Indians scattered over them: Crees, Blackfeet, Blood Indians, Piegans, Sarcees, Assiniboines, Sauteux. . . . In the vast district of Cumberland, hitherto necessarily neglected, Fathers Bonnald and Paquette see their efforts crowned with success.'"[6]

To help consolidate and extend the good work, two Oblate fathers, Hert and Mérer, arrived in the fall of 1878, who were immediately attached to that diocese. Unfortunately, by the most regrettable of accidents, the former, a young priest burning with zeal and of a consuming activity, was but too soon to fall a victim to his very intrepidity: he was found dead of fatigue and exposure by the shore of a lake on October 15, 1880.

A very different end was that of an older worker in the Lord's vineyard. After many years passed in the direction of the Ile à la Crosse Mission, Father Prosper Légeard, a fervent religious, a great apostle of the Sacred Heart and an able missionary, though his health did not permit of much travelling, went to his reward peacefully, assisted by his brothers in religion, on June 1, 1879, that is, on the very

[6] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XVI., p. 458.

threshold of the month consecrated to that Divine Heart he had so well served.

But, as Bishop Provencher repeatedly remarked, a religious Order may lose subjects by death or otherwise: it is itself, if not proof against extinction, at least in a position to guarantee a continuity in the prosecution of the tasks it has undertaken. Hence, on August 16, 1879, do we see Bishop Grandin returning from the General Chapter of the Oblates with two promising young priests, Fathers Lecocq and Rapet.

Légeard's eminent virtues were greatly appreciated by his Ordinary; but the humble religious had not the consolation of seeing the latter at his death-bed. Mgr. Grandin's own health had long been impaired, and he had been obliged to pass almost two years in Europe, preaching and collecting funds and goods for his distant missions, to which he could not return before November 20, 1879. So elated were his people at seeing him back at St. Albert that they gave him a grand reception: carriages with an escort of mounted halfbreeds, noisy volleys of musketry, and the thunder of cannon.

Meantime the period of transition they were traversing was telling on the proud children of the plains under him. Unaccustomed to manual labour, they were loath to resort to agriculture for a living; and yet the disappearance of the buffalo, now yearly more evident, was gradually forcing on them a mode of life for which they felt the greatest repugnance.

The stately Blackfeet, whose tribe still numbered some 6,000 souls, had been reduced to the necessity of killing and eating all their dogs, after which they had stooped to gophers and even mice, or the carcasses of dead animals, when they did not live on roots and old skins. The Government sent them rations; but what were these among so many!

"What a change since last fall!" exclaims Father Doucet (February 24, 1880). "I could scarcely recognize in these thin and emaciated victims of starvation, the splendid savages, veritable giants, I had seen before. They were men no more, but walking skeletons. The children and the old people especially have succumbed to the scourge. Mothers could no longer nurse the poor little things that died in their arms."[7]

Fortunately, if many departed this world prematurely, their death was but a passing into eternal life, as famine is usually the best possible missionary to the Indians. Hence an increase of labour for the priests, of which they were far from complaining.

In the Far North famine is so common that we have scarcely noticed it even when it carried off Indians by the dozen. Just then, however, conditions were not so desperate. The new missionaries, desirous of replacing the wretched huts of their predecessors by decent houses, were in several places showing their proficiency in carpentry. Thus at St. Michael's Father Roure, aided by Bro. Bois-

[7] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XVIII., pp. 155, 156.

ramé, was erecting (1879) a mission building which agreeably contrasted with the dilapidated abode he had found on his arrival at that place. As we have seen, the material side of Providence was on a satisfactory basis; but, with thirty orphans to feed and exceedingly limited pecuniary resources, manual labour could not be dispensed with, even by the priests and the bishop himself, when at home.

At Lake Athabasca, the heads of the two missions reported spiritual consolations which compensated them for their great privations. Writing of his nomadic flock, Father Pascal had the following under date December 10, 1879: "Several among them faithfully recite twice the beads every Sunday, as well as on Fridays and days of fast and abstinence. When away from the priest and buried in the solitude of the woods, they gather up all their religious pictures, with which they decorate a tepee, which for the nonce is transformed into a chapel. There they assemble to pray, and sing hymns in their language."[8]

[8] *Missions*, vol. XVIII., p. 137.

CHAPTER XXIX.

EPISCOPAL VISITATIONS AND PROTESTANT APPRECIATIONS.

1880-1881.

Etymologically, a missionary is "one who is sent," a messenger, and therefore a great traveller. We already know enough of the doings of those heralds of the Cross in northwestern Canada to need no further proof that they lived fully up to the meaning of their name. Unless absolutely debarred therefrom by infirmities, superiors of missions as well as simple missionaries passed most of their days, and some of their nights, on the wing, as there was scarcely any who had only one post under his care. Three or four, sometimes half a dozen or more, outposts had generally to be visited in rotation, while the bishops were, by virtue of their pastoral charge, bound to periodically inspect each of the missions, and occasionally even some of their dependencies. In 1880-81, Bishop Grandin made such a visitation of his immense diocese, in which the reader may accompany him if he wishes to survey in its entirety the good work then accomplished by his priests.

On April 12, 1880, in spite of a biting cold, he left St. Albert, accompanied by Father Végreville, arriving on the morrow at Our Lady of Lourdes, an out-

post newly founded on the left bank of the Saskatchewan, where a few French Canadians had settled. This little mission was attended by Father Mérer, of St. Albert, who directed at the same time the theological studies of two aspirants to the priesthood. The establishment was among the humblest: a wooden chapel 34 by 20, as yet unfinished, and a dwelling-house 24 by 20. After a pontifical high mass, confessions and confirmations—the order of the day followed at all the stopping places of the little party—the bishop leaves, April 19th, for St. François-Régis, or Fort Pitt, which he reaches on May 1st, after a trip made partly in a primitive vehicle, partly on foot, and after having been repeatedly delayed on the way by the crossing of about forty-five unbridged streams of all sizes, usually on the ice, but sometimes also through the water swollen by the spring freshets. We shall omit the numerous accidents: broken wheels or shafts, animals stuck fast in the mire or almost drowned in the rivers, and the like, which are the unavoidable accompaniment of such travelling. We must be content with a few words on the missions themselves which we meet in our path.

That of St. François-Régis is in charge of Fathers Fafard and Bourgine; but Father Petitot, the learned missionary of the north, whose state of health has demanded his removal from the snows of the Mackenzie, has arrived there to greet his new Ordinary. From a material standpoint this post is still less

advanced than that of Our Lady of Lourdes; but though it has existed barely two years, its registers attest already the administration of 287 baptisms, of which a quarter is of adults, and the celebration of twenty-five marriages. Five outposts depend from Fort Pitt, or St. François-Régis; namely, Long Lake, Frog Lake, Onion Lake, Rock Lake and Saddle Lake. These are frequented by Crees who formerly lived on buffalo, but have now to resort to fishing and public charity when the Government rations fail them. In each of them the Government keeps an agent whose province it is to teach them the principles of agriculture.

In this connection, even humble and charitable Grandin cannot refrain from remarking: "Without being a prophet, I think I am in a position to predict that the results will be far from commensurate with the expenses. The missionaries would succeed incomparably better if they had the same means, and it is to them that the agents of the Government owe the few successes they have achieved."[1]

The same authority adverts in these terms to another class of newcomers among those aborigines: "The different posts which I have just enumerated receive also the visit of Protestant clergymen of various sects. The apostles of error recruit themselves more easily than those of truth. Their superiors are less exacting, and subject them to fewer preparatory trials. They usually come to this coun-

[1] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XIX., p. 197.

try as schoolmasters; then one fine morning we learn that they have become *Reverend* and act as such. One meets at times halfbreeds and Indians who but yesterday barely knew how to read the Bible and to translate it incorrectly into a native dialect, promptly raised to the rank of ministers. Their compatriots regard them as savants because they read big books; but civilized folks, who daily arrive in larger numbers, are ashamed of their *Reverends,* and do not conceal their sentiments in this respect.''[2]

But the way is long: better arrive immediately (May 14th) with the bishop and Father Petitot at St. Raphael's, where the latter, with an energy which does not seem the worse for past privations and prolonged explorations, is endeavouring to put up the buildings of the new station. ''This father is the man of action by excellence,'' writes Grandin. ''Nothing can stop him; nothing frightens him. Along with a servant[3], he has cut down and hewn the lumber necessary for a large building. It is impossible to imagine the amount of work they have accomplished in three months. To fell spruces, say mass under a tent when the weather was not too severe, and go from time to time to visit his brethren of Fort Pitt and the Christians of Cold Lake was for this good father a distraction rather than labour.''[4]

[2] *Ibid., ibid.,* p. 198.

[3] Who deserted him for several months because the work he had to perform was beyond his powers of endurance.

[4] *Missions,* vol. XIX., pp. 199, 200.

The Indians of this new post are Chippewayans originating at Ile à la Crosse and Cold Lake. On Pentecost Sunday a solemn service, preceded by confessions and followed by confirmations, gladdened the heart of those good Christians.

On the 22nd the bishop gave an agreeable surprise to Father Chapelière, the pastor of Green Lake and one of the numerous recruits he had himself brought from France.[5] The natives settled there likewise hailed from Ile à la Crosse. Hence the prelate's partiality for them.

After a three days' stay, Mgr. Grandin left in a barge for Ile à la Crosse, which he had not seen for five years. Fathers Legoff, Chapelière and Rapet greeted him at the mission which he had so many reasons to remember. There he soon had clear evidence of consoling progress. The church was now much too small, in spite of the recent addition of a vestry and of a gallery. It is a source of satisfaction to remark that the increase in the population which those conditions bespoke was entirely due to an excess of births over deaths, not the result of outside accessions. Some 750 or 800 Chippewayans, now

[5]Father Gérasime Chapelière, a Frenchman hailing from the diocese of Laval, though he was born in that of Rouen, was to die two years later (11th July, 1882), a victim to his charity. His canoe having capsized, he easily saved himself by swimming ashore. But quite a number of Indians had been with him. As some of them could not extricate themselves from the water, he immediately went back for them, placed one of the children on his back, and, seizing another by the hair, he made for the land. But his double burden was too much for him. He succumbed to the awkwardness of his position, which rendered swimming impossible, sinking with the two children, whose frantic efforts to clutch his limbs resulted in his death.

perfectly civilized and as industrious as possible under the circumstances, attended that mission.

"All the Indians are Christians, and it can be said that their conduct is becoming daily more consistent with their faith. True civilization pervades their mode of life, and, were the land more favourable to agriculture, they would undoubtedly become a people entirely transformed from a material as well as a spiritual standpoint. The edge of the lake, in the arable portion, is dotted with houses surrounded by little fields; villages are then formed at regular intervals, to the distance of ten, twenty, thirty, and even more, leagues. In the spring and autumn, the missionary visits the villages, and this is a source of many journeyings."[6]

And to say that these Indians were originally nomads, glorying in their idleness and revelling in the coarsest vices!

On the occasion of the bishop's visitation, the exercises of a retreat were given, Mgr. Grandin preaching in French, Fathers Legoff and Rapet in Chippewayan, and Father Chapelière in Cree. The 6th of June was a Sunday; it was made the occasion of a solemn procession of the Blessed Sacrament. The visiting prelate received also the abjuration of a Protestant halfbreed, whom he afterwards regenerated in the waters of baptism.

June 15th, Grandin was at Methy Portage, a

[6]Bishop Grandin, in *Missions des Oblats de Marie Immaculée*, vol. XIX., p. 260.

minor station visited twice a year by Father Legoff. Exactly one month later, he arrived at Ste. Gertrude's Mission, Lake Pelican, whither he had gone by canoe in the midst of drenching rains and in the face of an almost incessant headwind. There he found Father Bonnald struggling with Protestantism, represented by the local schoolmaster. The priest had but the poorest dwelling quarters; but the quality of his Christians made up for the destitution of his residence. At the time of the preceding episcopal visitation, five years before, the same bishop had found there only a wooden cross and a score of Catholics; the latter are now two hundred, as a rule most attentive to their religious duties.

Fort Cumberland was the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company traders for the entire district. It had long been the bulwark of Protestantism in the country. But better days had come for Catholicism with the advent of Father Bonnald and the nomination as commander of the fort of a French Canadian of good family, Mr. Horace Bélanger, who was as excellent a Christian as he was an undoubted gentleman. This made the bishop's sojourn in the place especially pleasant, in spite of the presence of an Anglican archdeacon, who was himself on an official visitation to his co-religionists. That clergyman must have felt some surprise at the enthusiasm with which the "Roman" prelate was received in a locality but lately Protestant to the core. The bishop was taken in procession from

the fort to the mission, walking under a canopy carried by Mr. Bélanger and some elders. There he received the formal visit of the Governor of the Northwest Territories, who happened to be present.

With undisguised regret did the itinerant prelate forbear the pleasure of pushing on as far as Lake Caribou, and visiting Father Gasté in his distant retreat; such a voyage would have prevented him from returning that year to St. Albert, and his health did not allow of a winter journey. He therefore left Fathers Paquette and Lecocq in their mission of Fort Cumberland, taking, August 12th, the steamer for Prince Albert, which he reached on the 18th of the same month.

Prince Albert was then "almost a little English town," which the traveller thought would soon eclipse St. Albert! It had originally been a Hudson's Bay Company fort, round which a few settlers had gathered at a comparatively early date, for whom a Presbyterian church had also been built. In the course of 1879 Father Leduc purchased a lot on which a church and a priest's house were put up. Prince Albert was now the home of jolly Père André, who had in charge the few Catholics of the place and some dependencies, while Father Fourmond was stationed at St. Laurent of Grandin, which was reached soon after. There sixty persons were confirmed.

August 27th saw the bishop at Battleford, the capital of the Northwest, which did not seem to

have much faith in its own future, since the state of the place was truly pitiful to behold. The Catholic establishment was in keeping with its environments, the services being held in an apology for a church 20 by 25, covered with a thatched roof. Yet the town, such as it was, harboured the office of a newspaper, "The Saskatchewan Herald," a mere shack like all the habitations unconnected with the Government.

Such were then the headquarters of Father Lestanc. With him Bishop Grandin found Fathers Leduc, Hert and Bourgine, with Bro. Bowes, who had come to meet him from the west. After visiting several outposts, the prelate entered his beloved St. Albert, September 22nd, after an absence of five months.

In the spring of 1881, this episcopal tour was resumed on behalf of the southern missions of his diocese. Leaving St. Albert, April 27th, the bishop made the canonical visitation of St. Joachim's, or Edmonton, whence he proceeded to Our Lady of Peace (Calgary). On his way he installed, some forty-five miles from Edmonton, his only secular priest, the pioneer of that branch of the clergy in his diocese. This was Rev. Mr. Bellevaire, a native of the diocese of Nantes, France, who was to establish a new mission for the benefit of the Crees.

It was on April 30, 1881, that the incumbent of what was soon to be called Calgary, Father Doucet, received his Ordinary in his rather primitive quar-

ters. There, in addition to holding the usual confirmation service, the latter blessed a bell on Pentecost Sunday, June 5, 1881. Five days later he bade farewell to the Bow River, and on the 12th he was at Blackfoot Crossing, where he met some twelve hundred Blackfeet, and, three miles higher up, a camp of five hundred Sarcees.

His arrival was the occasion of many addresses from the natives, who harangued him to satiety with a view to obtaining resident priests. At the same time they inveighed against the Government and its agents among them. To the request that concerned him personally, the bishop kindly acceded, and immediate steps were taken to put his new plans into execution.

June 22nd, accompanied by Father Doucet, he was in sight of Fort McLeod, which struck him rather unfavourably as a "kind of a town which was dying before it had lived." "We have nothing there," adds the bishop, "but there are quite a number of Irish Catholics, and with them one always fares well. They took care of us during our stay, and on our departure they found the means of making us generous alms."[1]

On June 24th the camp of the Piegans, on Old Man's River, was visited, and the same request for priests heard. Mgr. Grandin was all the more inclined to meet the wishes of the natives as "since they have accepted the treaty and there are soldiers

[1] *Missions*, vol. XX., p. 316.

to protect the whites, ministers of all denominations abound. Far from posing as antagonists, they pretend to teach the same religion as we do," he adds, "and to come here only to be our auxiliaries and make up for the insufficiency of our numbers."[8]

There, as everywhere among the Plains Indians, polygamy was the principal obstacle to conversion. Nevertheless, Grandin put it on record that, by dint of perseverance and self-denial, over a thousand Blackfeet had been converted to the true faith and its morality. For these he now formally erected the mission of St. Léon.

While the Bishop of St. Albert was engaged in these peregrinations, his brother bishop of the Far North, Mgr. Clut, was returning from France to his distant missions. It took him seventy-five days to cover with carts the distance which separates St. Boniface from Lac la Biche, and he was not at the Nativity, on Lake Athabasca, before August 14, 1880. On November 8th of the following year, we still find him there with Father Pascal.

He then sent Father Laity to St. Henri's Mission (Fort Vermillion, on Peace River), a station which had been put on its present footing of permanency by Father Husson. September 24, 1881, we see the bishop arrive himself at St. Charles of Dunvegan, on the same stream, where Father Le Doussal receives him as best he can. What that "best" was, we can judge from the fact that his guest had to

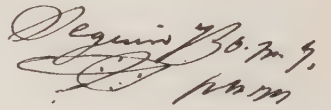
[8] *Ibid., ibid.*, p. 317.

decamp as soon as possible owing to the straits through which the missionary was just passing: nothing to eat but a few potatoes! Against hunger no reasoning could stand.

Therefore the bishop repaired to Lesser Slave Lake, as it was too late in the season to return to the Nativity. There Fathers Dupin and Le Serrec greeted him October 27th. In spite of their extreme poverty, the priests had adopted an old man, because none of his people would have him. Very soon they realized that by taking him over they had burdened themselves with his entire family. They had not the heart to turn them out, but preferred to lose the use of their kitchen, which those people had appropriated. Mgr. Clut could not see them so cramped for room, and had that part of their premises returned to its owners.

It was everywhere the same generosity and spirit of sacrifice. At the time we have reached in our narrative, the echo of the sad events which had resulted in the dispersion of the French religious communities had reached the wastes of the north, and it was apprehended that the missions would have to suffer thereby. But the missionaries were ready for any eventuality. "You seem quite affected by the melancholy happenings in France," the veteran Father Séguin wrote from Good Hope to Mgr. Clut. "Allow me to buoy up your spirits. Though we should have to suffer even greater privations, what matters it? If we compare our present

situation with that of former years, we will esteem ourselves happy as we are. I do hope that, with God's grace, we will be able to stand misery as we did in times past."



FATHER SEGUIN'S SIGNATURE.

If we now leave the dreary forests and deserts of the north and the vast plains of the Saskatchewan for the equally immense, but less lonely, prairies of Manitoba, we shall find the latter transformed into a theatre of unusual activity by both religious and secular rulers. At the head of the Catholic workers is Taché, whose noble figure looms up greater than that of any other personality, of whatever rank or creed, in the whole Canadian West. A French nobleman, who was a Huguenot, had shortly before visited Manitoba. In spite of the narrow prejudices common to most of his co-religionists in the old world, he could not refrain from testifying to the prelate's unbounded influence and sterling worth in a book published in 1880. From it we clip the following:

"The Roman Catholic Archbishop of St. Boniface, Mgr. Taché, a brother to the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Immigration at Ottawa, was then absent from Red River. I had seen him at Montreal and Ottawa, where he had gone to regain his health

MOST REV. A. TACHÉ, O.M.I.

First Archbishop of St. Boniface

shattered by twenty and more years of missions in the country of the Northwest. In my opinion—and this I say unmoved by any religious preoccupations —this prelate, whose influence extends over the whole French Canadian and halfbreed population, as well as a good portion of the Indians of his immense diocese, is one of those really superior men whose acquaintance leaves an impression as deep as it is lasting. . . . What he has conceived, attempted and achieved for the moral and material improvement of the country at the time when the Hudson's Bay Company ruled; the energy he has spent during the troubles occasioned by the annexation, to maintain on legal grounds a resistance which insane provocations might at any moment have converted into open strife; all this would require, in order to be properly set forth, more space than is allowed by the scope of this book.

"Few know so thoroughly the immense network of forests and prairies which form his immense diocese and those of his two suffragans,[9] the Bishop of St. Albert on the Saskatchewan and the Vicar-Apostolic of the Mackenzie River. The little book, simple though it seems, which he published in 1868 with the modest title *Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique,* is certainly the most complete and accurate collection of hydrographical, ethnological, botanical and zoological information on this vast region which has ever appeared in our language, and I doubt

[9]East of the Rocky Mountains.

whether there is one which is really superior among the whole range of English works on the subject. Let us add that Mgr. Taché has for collaborators in his ministry men remarkable by their zeal and learning.

"Such are, among others, Mgr. Grandin, a French Oblate, to-day Bishop of St. Albert; Father Lacombe, the author of conscientious works on the idioms of various tribes; Mgr. Faraud, Vicar-Apostolic of the Mackenzie; Father Petitot, of the same vicariate, one of the last laureates of the Geographical Society of Paris."[10]

To these Mr. de Lamothe might have added Father Legoff, who was also to publish linguistic works, and whose worth as a missionary is thus appreciated by a Protestant in the Toronto "Saturday Night":

"Whatever the bickerings of party politicians, whatever the aims of self-seeking and ambitious men, however strong religious antipathies in Eastern Canada may be, the writer (a Protestant) wishes to bear this testimony to the devotedness, earnestness and simplicity of the Roman Catholic missionaries in the far north portion of the Northwest. Where can be found a simpler, more gentle, earnest old man than Bishop Grandin, whose diocese extends over the territory north of the Saskatchewan? A more lovable old man the writer never met. To show what the Catholic missionaries will do, the case of Father Legoff may be mentioned. When the writer first met him he mistook him for an Indian.

[10] *Cinq Mois chez les Français d'Amérique,* pp. 266, 267. Paris, 1879.

Father Legoff was born in Quebec[11] and is of good birth, being descended from a long line of aristocratic nobles of Old France. Between thirty and forty years ago he volunteered for missionary work in the Northwest, and when the writer met him he had been for twenty-seven years a missionary to a little band of Wood Crees and Chippewayans at their settlement, 260 miles northeast from Edmonton and civilization. He was as tanned as an Indition, his clothes were ragged and torn, he looked ill and weary, but to hear him talk, as he sat at supper in the writer's tent, in the finest French (he cannot speak a word of English), to see his eye kindle and light up with enthusiasm as he spoke of the gratitude of the poor uncultured Indians under his charge, to gradually come to ascertain his gentleness of character, his childlike religious simplicity, to understand the hardships he had passed through—often in winter on the verge of starvation —to gradually take in all that he had given up, all that he had voluntarily assumed, was to love the shabby-looking priest, and to wish the world contained more such noble men and noble Christians.

"For months at a time this devoted priest never saw a newspaper or received a letter. For months at a time he never had a chance to talk in his native language. His diet was that of the Indians, coarse, plain, ill-cooked; he would work with the Indians on their little patches of clearances; he baptized, mar-

[11]A mistake. Father Legoff (or Le Goff) was a native of Brittany, France.

ried, buried them, and when his own time comes will be buried by them. And the case of this spare-looking, devoted, noble priest is but one of the many. Self-denial, self-abnegation is their characteristic. Father Damiens can be found, even in the solitude and vastness of the far north of the far Northwest.''[12]

The impression left on an old missionary by a perusal of the foregoing warm encomium is that he who wrote it must have had but a very limited acquaintance with the hardships of the Catholic missionaries, else he would not have waxed so enthusiastic over traits of their life which are common to all, and neglected particularities which are almost past belief.

To crown these lengthy quotations by one (likewise from a Protestant) which is intended for all the Catholic missionaries in Western Canada, here is what we read in a work by the great botanist, Prof. John Macoun, of Ottawa:

''Throughout the whole Northwest there have been no men of any Church superior in any sense to the fathers with whom the writer has met in his numerous journeys both east and west of the Rocky Mountains. He looks upon their labours as having produced due respect for the marriage relationship, a proper regard for the Sabbath, and an earnest for peaceable and upright dealings one with another, in every part of the country he has visited.''[13]

[12] *Ubi suprà.* That appreciation is reproduced in Hill's History of Manitoba, pp. 549-51.

[13] ''Manitoba and the Great North-West,'' p. 115. Guelph, 1882.

CHAPTER XXX.

FURTHER PROGRESS, SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL.
1880-1884.

It is such a satisfaction to see true merit recognized by those who might be expected to ignore it that we have somewhat tarried on the appreciatory remarks of Protestant authors. We have now to return to St. Boniface, which we unavoidably neglected in our last chapter. There we will find the archbishop, ever alive to the paramount importance of education, laying, May 2, 1880, the first stone of a new college building to replace the old one, now entirely too small. The new edifice was ready for occupancy by September of the following year; but the director of the institution could not enjoy the advantages of the improvements: Mr. Despatis died June 9, 1881, regretted by all for his qualities of mind and heart. Rev. Mr. Cherrier succeeded him.

On the west side of the Red another important building was rising above ground. It was St. Mary's church, the first edifice consecrated exclusively to Catholic worship in Winnipeg. Mgr. Taché blessed its corner-stone August 15, 1880, and, slightly over a year later (September 4, 1881), it was solemnly dedicated to God under the patronage of His blessed Mother by the same prelate, assisted by Archbishop

Lynch, of Toronto, who preached the sermon. Thus was inaugurated the brick church now standing on St. Mary's Avenue.

As an almost indispensable supplement thereto, three Brothers of Mary arrived from Dayton, Ohio, August 25, 1880, to take charge of the school for boys whom Father McCarthy had been directing since 1878.[1]

His superior, Father Lacombe, was at the same time leaving St. Mary's for a mission as novel to him as it was meritorious. The Canadian Pacific Railway was then being built, and already Fathers Allard, Baudin and Marcoux, O.M.I., had spent some time looking after the spiritual interests of the Catholics who formed perhaps one-half of the force engaged in its construction. Father Lacombe followed in the wake of these good priests, and passed sixteen months ministering to the workmen under the most untoward circumstances.

By this time the proportion of the Catholics settled in Manitoba had diminished to such an extent that the French element, which alone was represented by separate constituencies because of its more compact grouping, could claim but five, or at most six, seats in a house of twenty-four members. This urged the archbishop to renewed exertions. By correspondence and through Rev. Mr. Doucet and the lawyer Lalime, he encouraged the current of

[1]St. Mary's School under the new management was opened 1st Sept., 1880, with Brothers Bertrand, William and Joseph as teachers.

emigration from Eastern Canada and the New England States.

The newcomers were not always as numerous as the great Churchman and patriot might have wished, though, in April, 1878, Mr. Lalime had brought in as many as 423 colonists. But some of them were real acquisitions, of whom any country or denomination might have been proud. Such were, for instance, Mr. Thomas A. Bernier, a man who never hesitated to come forward whenever the interests of the Church or of education were at stake. He reached Manitoba, April 17, 1880. On the 28th of the following May came Mr. L. A. Prud'homme, an able writer, learned judge and thorough Christian, who has won high esteem by his accomplishments.

As early as August, 1877, four settlers had established themselves in the Pembina mountains. These pioneers were yearly followed by others, until in 1879 fifty families were to be found there who, on the 22nd of April, were organized as a parish under the vocable of St. Léon. On September 8th of the same year Rev. Mr. Theobald Bitshe became its first resident priest, and the locality soon entered upon a period of great prosperity. The following year (1880) another group, which had been organizing ever since 1878, St. Pierre, received its first incumbent in the person of Mr. J. M. A. Jolys, a native of Brittany. A church 40 by 32 was blessed in the new parish, which, four years later, had to be replaced by one 85 feet long and 45 in width.

Both of these parishes were French. But, together with Ontario Orangemen and Slavs and Britishers from the Old World, the tide of immigration was bringing not a few Irish and other English-speaking Catholics, who, naturally enough, were settling among people of their own tongue. Thus it came to pass that the parish of St. Mary's had to be divided, as the Catholics in the vicinity of Point Douglas, where the first missionaries had landed in 1818, could not, owing to the distance and other reasons, conveniently frequent the church on St. Mary's Avenue. Hence in the course of 1882 Mgr. Taché had himself a new church built for that portion of his flock, which he blessed December 8th of the same year. March 4, 1883, he entrusted it to the care of Father Lebret, O.M.I.

Such was the origin of the parish of the Immaculate Conception in Winnipeg. Its first school opened at the same time as it received its first resident pastor.

That same year, 1883, saw the beginning (August 3rd) of the boarding school for young ladies of St. Boniface, for which a building 100 by 50 had been constructed. Taché had no uncertain views concerning education. To him the school was but the adjunct of the church and the complement of the Christian home. He could not conceive of any divorce between religion and instruction. In this he was but following all the really great minds of the age.

Among the best recruits of the time we must mention Rev. Mr. Joseph A. Messier, whose first sphere of action was the college. That ecclesiastic was as yet in minor orders; on May 19, 1883, he was admitted to the priesthood, and two years later he became secretary to the archbishop and assistant priest of the cathedral parish. In February, 1882, another cleric, Rev. Jos. Campeau, likewise commenced his career at St. Boniface College. He was ordained priest in the course of 1884, and the following year he became practically the founder of St. Alphonse, a new parish which had received corporate existence in 1883, by being detached from the territory of St. Léon.

These ecclesiastical newcomers, coinciding with increasing religious needs, greatly consoled the venerable prelate. They made him look more complacently on the passage at St. Boniface of such men as Father Legal and others, whom he saw there in May, 1881, on their way to a more western field. Yet they made such an impression on him that he could not help confiding it to his friend of St. Albert.[2] It is, however, more than doubtful if the metropolitan of the St. Boniface province ever realized that, in the passing Oblate we have named, he saw the future successor of his western suffragan.

It can scarcely be gainsaid that, in his capacity of religious superior of the Oblates under his episcopal jurisdiction, Taché was at times tempted to believe

[2]To Mgr. Grandin, May 28th, 1881.

he was somewhat neglected by the Paris authorities in the distribution of subjects for the various posts in the keeping of his Order. In answer to mild remonstrances on that point, Father Ouellette was sent him in the spring of 1883. The new priest was afterwards to become the parish priest of St. Mary's, which Father Lavoie was governing since October 1st of the preceding year.

The archbishop could not but be pleased with his new subject. Yet, as vicar of missions he was scarcely satisfied with one. He cast longing eyes in the direction of Eastern Canada, where laboured another who, he had been told, "spoke English well, and had the necessary talents to worthily represent the Congregation at St. Mary's."[3] This suggestion, which was almost a request, referred to Father Adélard Langevin. It was made in November, 1884, but was not to be heeded for many years to come. When finally acted on, a dignity far transcending the pastorate of St. Mary's was in store for the object of Taché's choice.

Father Lebret's presence being needed at Qu'Appelle, he received his obedience for that post in the summer of 1884, resigning the care of his parish of the Immaculate Conception into the hands of Mr. Cherrier (July 14th), who has ever since remained in charge of the same. Rev. Mr. Azarie Dugas, a new arrival, took his place at the head of the college.

[3]To Rt. Rev. Father Fabre, Superior-General of the Oblates; St. Boniface, 17th Nov., 1884.

The time seemed now arrived to replace in the most prosperous localities the wooden and temporary church buildings by edifices of more lasting material. After St. Mary's church and St. Boniface college, we have now the church of St. Norbert, which Mr. Ritchot rebuilt in brick (1883). Better churches were also provided in 1884 for St. Jean-Baptiste, St. Pierre and Qu'Appelle Station.

It was likewise an epoch fecund in religious foundations. In the first place, we have to record the establishment, early in May, 1883, of a convent school at Ste. Anne des Chênes. Then, in September of the same year, five nuns (Faithful Companions of Jesus) arrived from France at Brandon, destined to teach the young of their own sex. We have already seen that in 1883 a school was started in connection with the parish of the Immaculate Conception, under the direction of the Sisters of the Holy Names. Its first roll contained seventy-five pupils.

A still more important foundation, at least as far as the aborigines of Manitoba were concerned, was negotiated that same year at Ottawa and decided on in principle, though as a matter of fact the ill-will of the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Northwest succeeded, for the time being, in causing a postponement of its realization. We refer to the Industrial School of Qu'Appelle, which was soon to become the prototype of all such institutions. Pending the establishment of that school, Archbishop Taché

founded four others for the benefit of the original inhabitants of his diocese.

But this solicitude for the welfare of his dusky children could not make him forget the whites and halfbreeds. In the spring of 1884, a new parish with a resident priest was started at La Broquerie, with a Mr. Guay as first incumbent. Some time later, August 3, 1884, there was blessed at Regina, a mere speck on the prairie just chosen for the capital of the Northwest, a small but beautiful edifice which became Rev. Mr. Larche's church.

The times of long and tedious voyages in ox-carts were gone. The Canadian Pacific Railway had just entered upon its successful career, and as one of Taché's missionaries had been of very material assistance in its construction, the latter had received from the company privileges which he felt honoured to share with his ecclesiastical superior.

The difficulties which attended the laying of the steel rails from Winnipeg to the Pacific were not all of a physical order. Puzzled at first at the labours of the gangs of workmen who unceremoniously tore the bosom of their native prairies, the proud children of the plains had soon become incensed at the hardihood of the pale-faced strangers. Their irritation reached a climax when they were told of the wave of immigration of which the iron horse was but the forerunner and instrument. The Blackfeet especially made themselves conspicuous by their opposition to the enterprise, and formally notified the

workmen that they must stop meddling with land that was not theirs and return to their country, wherever that might be.

Fortunately, the foremen had made the acquaintance of Father Lacombe, and were aware of his immense influence over the redskins. In their distress they appealed to him. The missionary lost no time in repairing to the scene of the trouble; but, perfectly familiar with aboriginal usage, he did not go empty-handed. Having bought a quantity of tobacco and some victuals, he gave to his indignant children one of those feasts without which no serious business can be transacted among the braves of the west.

When they had smoked and eaten to their hearts' content, he reminded them of all he had done for them in the past.

"Did I ever give you an ill-advised counsel?" he asked.

"Never," they confessed.

"Have I not always shown myself your best friend on earth?"

"Always."

Then in impassioned language he cautioned the young men, who are everywhere empty-headed, against the presumptuous use of violence towards the whites who, in their own country, are numerous as the mosquitoes on a sultry day, and would never leave unavenged any wrong done their fellows. He expatiated on the advantages of a railway, and gave

assurances that the tribe's lands would ever be respected.

As a result, work was resumed, and now Archbishop Taché had a special car at his disposal when he first visited Regina and, later on (September 21, 1884), Calgary.

This last place had then scarcely outgrown its embryotic period. In spite of its commanding situation, it had not seemed called to any higher destiny than that of a military post, until the day when it was learnt that the C. P. R. authorities had abandoned the route *viâ* Battleford and Edmonton for that through the south and Rogers' Pass. Soon enough the white tents of the workmen were sighted to the east of Fort Calgary, which, in an incredibly short time, were pitched in the shadow of its stockade. Independently of the mounted police, the settlement had so far consisted of two stores and a few huts occupied by whites and halfbreeds, and the mission was a house whose first story was taken up with a large apartment doing duty as a church. In the wake of the railway workmen pressed a number of merchants and speculators. Eight days after the arrival of the first locomotive, more than fifty of their tents dotted the angle made by the junction of the Bow and Elbow Rivers, many of which were shortly after replaced by houses. Then, from Eastern Canada and even Europe, came on the trains tradesmen and settlers, who established themselves in the place and immediate vicinity.

Such was the origin of Calgary, now the Queen of Southern Alberta, which was already assuming the airs of a young town when Taché visited it.

On his return journey, he called at his beloved mission of Qu'Appelle, twenty-four miles from the line. The buildings of the Industrial School, against the establishment of which Governor Dewdney had fought so hard, were just being finished, with financial assistance from Ottawa, but on land bought by the archbishop himself. Three sisters were expected, who arrived October 21st of that year and opened school to over fifty Indian children. Father Lebret was the superior of the establishment, with a reasonable salary from the Federal authorities of Canada. Mgr. Taché was delighted with the prospects of the school, and thanked God for having inspired him with such a persevering zeal for its foundation.

Among the personnel of that mission was then a young priest, a man of few words and deep counsels, Rev. Prisque J. Magnan, who, arrived in April, 1884, was to pass there long and useful years as director of the same before he was called to higher functions.[4]

After this visit, Taché's trip became an episcopal tour of inspection, in the course of which he saw his dear parishes of St. Joseph, St. Pie, St. Jean-Baptiste, Fort Alexander, and, from January to April of 1885, St. Norbert, Ste. Agathe, Notre-Dame de

[4]Father Magnan is to-day Provincial of Manitoba, with residence at Winnipeg.

Lorette, Ste. Anne des Chênes and Rat Portage (now Kenora). This place, which was then the abode of Father Baudin, was not reached before April 25, 1885. But we must not anticipate.

Most of these parishes had had for their first inhabitants French halfbreeds who, ill at ease within the narrow limits of a farm, had migrated northwards, and joined their compatriots born in the valley of the Saskatchewan, at St. Albert and vicinity, Ste. Anne and other missions. St. Laurent of Grandin was one of those halfbreed settlements. It saw, June 29, 1883, the arrival of Bishop Grandin, accompanied by a band of Faithful Companions of Jesus, the new Order of nuns which the metropolitan had already introduced in his own archdiocese.

These religious, who were already favourably known in England, had their mother-house at the famous shrine of Ste. Anne d'Auray, in Brittany. They were highly recommended by Princess Louise, and the Marquess of Lorne had also furnished them with the most flattering credentials.

Four of the good sisters were stationed among the halfbreeds of St. Laurent, while an equal number were proceeding to Prince Albert, where the population was largely white and English-speaking. In both places they started schools, but with unequal success. At Prince Albert their services were immediately appreciated by Protestants and Catholics; so much so indeed that some of the former declared that no better schools than theirs existed anywhere

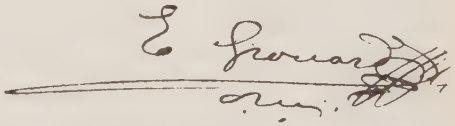
throughout Ontario. At St. Laurent public recognition of their usefulness was slower, because French halfbreeds are never so quick to appreciate the advantages of education, and because local conditions, such as the crossing of the Saskatchewan, militated against regular attendance. Nevertheless, even there success was bound to crown the efforts of the new teachers, and, before the end of 1883, they had enrolled fifty children.

Meantime, the zeal for education which has ever been characteristic of the Catholic Church—the foundress of the great universities and many famous schools—was prompting even the priests to teach the children when no brothers or sisters were available. Thus at McLeod, a border town none too orderly, which scarcely counted sixty Catholics, Father Vantighem was daily performing the duties of a schoolmaster for the benefit of about ten boys.

Even within Bishop Faraud's vicariate-apostolic analogous cares were engrossing the attention of the missionaries, though the beneficiaries of their favours were mere Indian lads. Father Grouard, of Lac la Biche, was not exactly teaching, but he provided the teachers with the means of following their avocation by printing for them and their pupils books in the native languages. In this task he could even occasionally boast the assistance of an episcopal type-setter in the person of the vicar-apostolic himself.

When not busy in the press or composing room, he

was setting out in quest of souls to strengthen in the path of duty, or attending sick calls which at times led to what we might consider fool's errands, were we not assured that every step of the missionary is faithfully entered in the book of life. Thus, in the course of 1882, two Chippewayans called him to the death-bed of two of their compatriots. Grouard hurriedly left with them and, after five days of forced marching, he arrived at their camp in time to learn that they had just been buried!



FATHER GROUARD'S SIGNATURE.

The same father was now (1883) ordered to Peace River, where the Catholic missions were stagnating, owing to the extremely inconstant character and nomadic habits of the Indians, as well as the little familiarity of the priests with their dialects. The abject poverty of the missionary stations on that stream might also have contributed to render more or less barren the exertions of the fathers. In all sincerity, it is hard to see what respect the coarse mind of the roving Beaver Indians could entertain for ministers of religion who had to act as beasts of burden, pulling their own sleighs for the lack of animals, and living on potatoes when they were lucky enough to possess a sufficiency of the same.

The struggle for life in that isolated valley, where all the commodities of civilization were so hard to procure that flour could scarcely be got at twenty-five cents a pound, was indeed the first and last duty of man, even of the missionary, who had perforce to become farmer that he might live to preach the word of God. Farmer, therefore, we find Father Grouard at St. Charles of Dunvegan, in the company of genial Father Husson and devoted Bro. Renault who, in spite of his advanced age, rendered the greatest services. His zeal for the material interests of the poor mission excited the admiration even of the Protestant clergyman, who did not cease to wonder how it was that his "own evangelical denomination could not beget such devotedness in men who were not even in holy orders."[5]

On the other hand, charity and neighbourly feelings were not less prominent at St. Charles Mission than devotion to duty. Even antagonists profited by those Christian dispositions, and as, for instance, the Anglican minister could not alone put up his stacks of hay, Father Husson good-naturedly volunteered to help him in that unclerical task.

Even the missionary bishops had occasionally to stoop to such manual labour, though travelling and visiting the different posts under them occupied most of their time. Mgr. Faraud was then tormented by excruciating pains of a nervous nature; hence he generally stayed at Lac la Biche, leaving

[5] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XII., p. 156.

it to his active coadjutor of Providence to travel through his vicariate-apostolic, one of the largest and certainly the most trying in the whole world. Yet he felt the responsibility of his charge, and, just before he sent Father Grouard to Peace River, he personally made a long and exceedingly difficult visitation of the Mackenzie missions, the incidents of which need not be here related after all the details we have already given on similar expeditions.

Moreover, events of an overwhelming importance were now slowly shaping themselves, which call for our undivided attention.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE SASKATCHEWAN REBELLION.
1884-1885.

By the end of 1882, and during the first weeks of 1883, the employees of the Parliament buildings at Ottawa became familiar with the sight of a venerable gentleman of noble mien, yet simple bearing, tall and erect in spite of his snow-white hair, which was evidently due more to cares and anxieties than to the hand of time. This was Mgr. Grandin.

He had left his distant plains and lakes to come and plead the cause of his people, especially those of mixed blood. Civilization, which had caused the influx of so many to the Saskatchewan valley, was now advancing with giant strides, and with it the fear for the halfbreeds of another expropriation of their homes and holdings. It was the repetition of the situation in 1869, with this all-important difference that the natives of Manitoba had to stand the provocation of a power which had no jurisdiction over them, while in the Saskatchewan there was a regularly appointed and incontestable authority.

Unfortunately that very authority was the cause of the uneasiness which prevailed among all classes, English as well as French, inasmuch as it seemed unable to grasp the real state of affairs in that far-

off territory. As early as February 1, 1878, the inhabitants of St. Laurent had complained of the uncertainty in which they were left by the negligence of the Ottawa Government to settle the land difficulties of the halfbreeds. They wanted proper surveys made for their lands and grants of scrips similar to those already bestowed on their Manitoban compatriots. Identical claims were made and petitions sent from many places, such as St. Albert, in March, 1878; Prince Albert, June, 1878; Cypress Hills, in the course of the same year; Duck Lake, February 23, 1880; Qu'Appelle, 1881, and elsewhere. The redressing of those grievances was now all the more impatiently awaited as it was known that a transcontinental railway was nearing completion, which was expected to increase enormously the wave of immigration already rolling over the prairie.

High personages such as Archbishop Taché (January 27, 1878), Governor Laird (September 30, 1878), the Anglican Bishop McLean (January 18, 1879), Colonel Richardson (December 1, 1879), and others, had also sent to the Dominion authorities memoirs asking for a speedy settlement of the difficulties; but so far the results had been very unsatisfactory. Under date November 22, 1881, the Federal Government had even denied that the halfbreeds had any legitimate grievances, because, forsooth, treaties had been made with the Indians! Hence Bishop Grandin's mission, on which he had left in October, 1882.

Land surveyors had then arrived who, in conformity with repeated requests, were following the mode of surveying proper to Quebec, because, in order to be near one another and the more easily attend church, the halfbreeds had everywhere settled along lakes and rivers, on claims with a very narrow frontage, but two miles deep. Suddenly the wire flashed the order that all surveying must be made by square townships. This meant the annihilation of all the improvements so far accomplished; the huddling together of nine or ten families on the same claim; the destruction of the halfbreed homes, and the dismemberment of entire colonies.

The people of St. Albert immediately protested; but for fifteen days the telegraph proved unavailable. Therefore, in spite of their poverty, they subscribed a goodly sum towards defraying the expenses of two delegates, Father Leduc and Mr. B. Maloney, who left for Ottawa, January 27, 1883.

On their way, those gentlemen received an analogous commission, with corresponding pecuniary aid, from Fort Saskatchewan, an English-speaking community, and reached destination March 15th of the same year.

The burden of their mission was a demand for: first, a special survey at St. Albert; second, the gratuitous concession of the lands already occupied; third, the opening of a land office; fourth, the reduction of the pre-emption fee to what it was at the time land had been taken; fifth, the right of rep-

resentation in the legislature; sixth, the abolition of certain taxes on timber; seventh, the creation of a registry bureau, and eighth, the right of the half-breeds and their children to special lands throughout the Northwest Territories.

After much waiting and by dint of keeping themselves in the eyes of the Crown ministers, Father Leduc and his co-delegate obtained most of these advantages. Unfortunately there were but promises made, which nobody in official circles seemed anxious to transform into facts.

Meantime the halfbreeds were getting impatient. Everywhere assemblies were being held to ventilate the unredressed grievances, and expatiate on the dilatoriness and apparent bad faith of the Federal Government. Finally in May, 1884,[1] a committee composed of Messrs. James Isbister, Gabriel Dumont, Moïse Ouellette and Michel Dumas was formed with the object of going to Montana, seven hundred miles distant, and requesting L. Riel, the quondam President of the Provisional Government of Red River, to come and help them secure their rights.

Since we parted with him, Riel had had an eventful career. Though outlawed by the Federal Government, he had repeatedly been elected to the

[1]All contemporaneous documents have it June instead of May; but as Riel's letter of acceptance is dated 5th June, and the delegates had to cover an immense distance and wait one day before receiving an answer, they could not have received their mission during the same month.

GABRIEL DUMONT

Dominion Commons by his grateful compatriots. He had even once signed his name in the members' register at Ottawa, after which he had been obliged to flee for his life. Wherever he went he seemed to be shadowed by Orange hirelings, eager to earn the $5,000 put on his head. The strain on the mind of the naturally excitable halfbreed had been too much for him, and as the result of a mental collapse he had to seek rest and safety in the asylums of Beauport and Longue Pointe.

After a period of treatment he wandered through the United States, becoming finally stranded at St. Peter's Mission, Montana, where he taught school under the Jesuit fathers, and employed his leisure hours in writing verse expressive of his gratitude for his benefactor, Mgr. Taché, and of the deepest resentment against Sir John A. Macdonald and compeers in the Government, whom he regarded as the cause of his misfortunes. He had also married, and was now the father of two children.

When summoned north by the halfbreed delegation, he asked for twenty-four hours to consider the proposal, at the end of which he left with his family, but with the intention of coming back "early this fall."[2]

On the banks of the Saskatchewan Riel was received as a saviour by English and French alike. And here we may point to a slight inaccuracy in

[2]Riel's letter to the delegates, 5th June, 1884, in Begg's "History of the North-West," vol. III., p. 186, and elsewhere.

Begg's account of these events. This author states that "English as well as French settlers along the Saskatchewan thought that they were being unfairly treated by the Dominion, but the introduction of Riel into the difficulty at once left the French alone in the agitation."[3]

This is certainly incorrect. Indeed the same writer contradicts himself on this point within a few pages. He asserts that "as early as 1877 one hundred and fifty *Scotch* halfbreeds of Prince Albert petitioned the Government to instruct the surveyors to establish boundaries of their buildings,[4] and from that time *till the outbreak* [italics ours] in 1885, the old settlers and halfbreeds of the Northwest kept on an unavailing agitation to obtain this very reasonable concession."[5] He moreover quotes a letter wherein Father André writes Riel that "it would be a great disappointment to the people of Prince Albert if [he] did not come."[6] The reader remembers that the population of that town was mostly English. Lastly, Begg admits that, after Riel's arrival, about the first of July, 1884, "many of the English settlers sympathized with the movement, and countenanced the agitation, hoping thereby to induce the Government to come to their assistance."[7]

The truth is that the good the halfbreed leader

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 184.
[4] *Sic* probably for "holdings."
[5] *Ibid., ibid.*, p. 183.
[6] Begg, "History of the North-West," vol. III., p. 187.
[7] *Ibid.*

had accomplished in Manitoba was generally realized, and had his mind been able to stand the strain of a new agitation, there was no reason to fear lest he might not have led the movement to a successful issue.

He entered upon his new public career by asking the blessing of a priest, and for some time he was very moderate and prudent in his counsels. As a further proof that the English-speaking coöperated with him, we see, a fortnight after his arrival, Stipendiary Magistrate Matthew Ryan writing to the press (July 15, 1884), a long letter which embodied the grievances of Riel's compatriots. The justice of these was strongly defended by the Council of the Northwest (July 21st).

At that time dissatisfaction was general among the people of the Saskatchewan, Indians as well as halfbreeds; so much so indeed that nobody can today absolve from criminal negligence the Ottawa authorities who persistently ignored such a patent fact. Government farm instructors were then being assaulted by rebellious Crees under Poundmaker, who defied thirty members of the mounted police to arrest the guilty party; after which the famous chief, still in his war dress, asked Father Cochin to write a note giving him power to help himself to the soldiers' provisions.[8]

Political meetings were held in various places, at some of which the Catholic clergy assisted, in order

[8] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XXI., p. 28.

to check the growing boldness of Riel. Gradually, however, a chasm was created between priests and people, because the latter, tired of waiting for the acknowledgment of their rights, became suspicious that the restraining action of the former was dictated by a desire to please those in power at the expense of their flocks. With contradiction Riel became more and more irritable, and, unable to hold his own in discussions with the priests, he convoked secret assemblies wherein he endeavoured to undermine the influence of those he was already beginning to regard as his enemies.

When reasoned with he was violent, and fell into excesses of language which he was generally the first to regret afterwards. Profoundly religious though he was, it became sadly evident that politics were leading him into a whirlpool wherein even his orthodoxy was wrecked. In a word, the turmoil of the agitation was bringing on a return of the disease which had sent him to Beauport.

This became so plain that, at a meeting of all the priests of the district, it was unanimously decided that the agitator was not *compos mentis,* and therefore should not be admitted to the sacraments.[9]

At length, the Government seemed, but too late, to realize the gravity of the situation. On March 4, 1885, scrips were granted by telegraph to such of the halfbreeds as had not received any in Manitoba. But either because unscrupulous whites fomented

[9] *Affaires du Nord-Ouest,* Father André's Testimony, p. 137.

the revolt with an eye to personal advantages,[10] or because Riel could no longer control himself and was resolved to bring matters to a climax, a provisional government was formed, March 18, 1885, with Riel as president and Gabriel Dumont as military leader.[11] At the same time several stores were raided at St. Laurent, prisoners were taken and men enrolled on all sides, whether they consented or not. And the more the Catholic clergy opposed such a course, the greater became the breach between the Church and the halfbreed tribune.

The latter had established his headquarters at St. Antoine, or Batoche;[12] he now forcibly seized the village church, which he converted into a barracks in spite of Father Moulin's protests. Then, in keeping with his great religious instincts, a public show of which was now all the more needed as the naturally docile Métis felt uneasy at the opposition of their spiritual guides, Riel hoisted a flag of his own making, with the ten commandments inscribed on a

[10]Just as the rebellion was on the point of breaking out, a white man passing at Batoche told the halfbreeds that they were pretty soon to be silenced, as five hundred of the mounted police were coming to bind their leader in chains.

[11]Gabriel Dumont was a unique character, a child of nature, but slightly polished up by religion, brave to the point of rashness, and confiding as a child in his relations with those he considered his superiors. He was born in Manitoba (1838) of Isidore Dumont, whose father had been a French-Canadian from Montreal, and of Louise Laframboise, likewise a French halfbreed. He was a typical buffalo hunter, and remained unlettered all his life. He died at Bellevue, Sask., 19th May, 1906.

[12]So named after a wealthy French halfbreed, who absented himself rather than take part in the rebellion, through which he eventually lost everything he possessed there.

white field. He also commenced leading a life of great asceticism, fasting and praying unremittingly in a sort of oratory wherein were exposed to view, along with a cross and some holy pictures, an old letter of Bishop Bourget, of Montreal, whom he intended to place on the pontifical throne after he had deposed Leo XIII., and a special blessing for the halfbreeds which he had made Bishop Grandin sign the previous autumn.

He furthermore assured his followers that no harm was to befall them, but that they were under the special protection of God, though his mistaken ministers were against them. We must say that, at first, these assurances did appear to be partially borne out by facts. On March 26th, Major Crozier, who was in command at Fort Carlton, having sent sleighs escorted by about forty men to bring in from Duck Lake provisions belonging to a Mr. Mitchell, Gabriel Dumont prevented them from accomplishing their mission. Thereupon Crozier himself left for Duck Lake with a force of one hundred men and a cannon. On the way he also took with him the forty soldiers who had been turned back.

Dumont claimed afterwards that he had with him only twenty-five horsemen, with some unmounted followers, when he encountered Crozier's troop of one hundred and forty men some distance from Duck Lake. The halfbreeds are also unanimous in asserting that the first shot was fired by the red-coats,

whose initial volley laid low an Indian, after Dumont's own brother had been killed by the discharge of a rifle from the ranks of the enemy. Encouraged by Riel, who held up in sight of all Father Touze's Oblate crucifix he had wrenched from its owner, the halfbreeds reciprocated with a will. Their excellent markmanship from a place of vantage soon began to tell on the soldiers, who were put to flight in not more than half an hour. Crozier lost twelve killed, as against four on the side of the halfbreeds. Among those slightly hit was Gabriel Dumont himself, who received a scalp wound. This forced him to retire momentarily, when his brother Edouard took up the command.

As the troops were fleeing from the field, Dumont wanted to pursue them and profit by their demoralization; but Riel, who was ever animated by humane sentiments even when these appeared out of place, prevented such a course, under the plea that "too much blood had already been shed." Soon thereafter the mounted police evacuated Fort Carlton, to effect their junction with the volunteers of Prince Albert. Dumont was for intercepting them; but he had again to yield to Riel's restraining orders.

After this victory, the new "president" ruined his cause by sending couriers to the various Indian tribes, with letters and tobacco, inciting them to rise and seize as much as they could of arms and ammunition in the different stores, previous to coming and helping their kinsmen, the halfbreeds. Several bands

of pagan Crees obeyed the summons; but the priests immediately set upon thwarting that movement to the best of their ability. Father Lacombe kept the Blackfeet at peace;[13] Father Paquette did the same with the Crees of Green Lake, and Father Collignon with those of Lac la Biche, while Fathers Végreville, Moulin, Fourmond, Legoff, Leduc and others made themselves prominent in enforcing legality and keeping down the malcontents who would otherwise have joined Riel's forces.

At St. Albert the immense influence of saintly Mgr. Grandin himself kept at bay the halfbreeds of the mission, in spite of their well-known state of dissatisfaction. Through the agency of the Catholic missionaries, corps of volunteers were even organized at that place as well as at Lac la Biche and Ile à la Crosse, with a view to protecting these missions against the rebels.

This energetic opposition exasperated Riel. He condemned to death some of the priests, but never laid hands on them, though he verbally abused such as he would meet. One day he approached Father

[13] "A messenger of peace had preceded him [Gen. Strange] in the person of the venerable Father LaCombe, who alone, and at the worst season of the year for travelling, had visited all the Indian reserves, and by his Christian diplomacy had persuaded the savages to maintain a strict neutrality. . . . Had the western Indians joined their brothers of the east and north, this history would have had more serious events to record, for the Blackfeet, Piegans, Bloods, Circes and Assiniboines were known to be the most warlike and cruel tribes on the plains. Father LaCombe's visit, just at the critical moment, and his intimate friendship with Crowfoot and other powerful chiefs, was, without doubt, a principal cause in keeping these formidable tribes in check" (Begg, "Hist. of the N.-W.," vol. III., p. 237).

Fourmond with several of his confrères, and announced to them that he "had been appointed by the council to be thenceforth their spiritual director"; to which Father Fourmond answered that the only way for him to fill such functions was to have the priests shot, as he could then do with them as he pleased.[14]

Then the head of the unfortunate became more unbalanced and his religious theories more heterodox. According to the theological system engendered by his diseased brain, only the first of the three Divine Persons was God. Hence in reciting the Hail Mary his poor deluded followers had to say: "Holy Mary, mother of the Son of God," instead of "mother of God." He had also on the Real Presence strange and even absurd notions. The Church he now condemned and derided as the Old Roman Woman; after he had brought to a successful issue the little trouble on his hands just then, he was to go and establish the Papacy in the New World, and because the priests refused to hear the confessions of the rebels, he did not scruple to take himself their place in that delicate ministry. He moreover posed as a prophet, claimed to be favoured with visions, etc.

In all of this there is no doubt in our mind that he was sincere, instead of playing a rôle, as many have believed who could not understand his make-up and the real state of his mind. Innumerable facts

[14] *Affaires du Nord-Ouest*, p. 139.

could be adduced to show that he was no more responsible for his acts.[15] But some of their consequences were truly appalling.

We have already mentioned in the preceding pages Father Fafard, an able French Canadian priest, who had created a fine establishment at Frog Lake, where he strove, aided at times by a neighbouring younger missionary from France, Father Marchand, to do good to Indians who but imperfectly corresponded to God's graces. Among the native chiefs who had risen at Riel's bidding was the pagan Cree known as Big Bear, an Indian who commanded over the natives of Fort Pitt. On Holy Thursday, April 2, 1885, immediately after the morning service, which his men had deliberately disturbed, both priests as well as the whites of the locality were summoned to the warrior's camp. Among those that took part in that sad procession were Tom Quinn, the Indian agent, and Mr. Delaney, the farm instructor.

It appears that the latter suddenly refused to go on; whereupon, according to an eye-witness (a Mr. Cameron), "the Indians raised their guns and rushed at him. Father Fafard dashed up and placed himself in front of the menacing Indians, but was overpowered by numbers, and thrown down," when he was shot. "Father Marchand was meanwhile attempting to keep the Indians from going after the woman [a Mrs. Simpson]. When he saw that Father

[15]For instance, his sudden transitions from the most violent anger to extreme politeness towards the same persons, and other acts attested under oath by priests (*Ubi suprà*, pp. 137, 139, 140).

Fafard had been killed, he attempted to push his way to the crowd of Indians to reach the body,[16] but they resisted. He was a wiry man and fought hard.'"[17] Then an Indian rushed up and shot him dead. Seven other whites were slain with the priests and some women taken prisoners.

Such was the Frog Lake Massacre, in which both missionaries fell martyrs to charity, Father Fafard having succumbed because he insisted on saving Delaney, and his confrère because he was no less firm in his determination to give spiritual aid to his senior.[18]

The bodies of the two martyrs were thrown into the basement of the church, which had previously been despoiled of all its ornaments, sacred vessels, etc. While coming out, the murderers were amazed to see (or thought they saw) the large picture of the

[16]Evidently to give his murdered confrère a last absolution in case he was still living.

[17]It appears that Father Fafard was not instantly killed. An Indian who wished him well bade him remain motionless, so that he might pass for dead. But pain or some other reason caused a nervousness which betrayed him, and a bad Christian whom he had prevented from divorcing his wife shot him point-blank.

[18]Father Fafard was born 8th June, 1850, at St. Cuthbert, diocese of Montreal. He made his perpetual vows as an Oblate 29th June, 1874, and left the following year for the missions of St. Albert, where he was ordained 8th Dec., 1875. At the time of his death he was superior of a missionary district. Father Marchand was born 8th April, 1858, at Chateaugiron, diocese of Rennes, France. He made his perpetual Oblation 8th Dec., 1882, when he was sent to Ottawa to finish his theological studies. Bishop Grandin ordained him priest in Sept., 1883, and gave him as a socius to Father Fafard. Since the autumn of 1884 he was in charge of an outpost at Onion Lake, some 25 miles from Frog Lake, and had presumably come to his superior, that both might have the Holy Week ceremonies together, and therefore performed in a more thorough manner than could have been possible for a single priest.

Sacred Heart take a threatening attitude, and bespeak by a significant motion of the hand the retribution that was in store for them. Therefore, to get rid of the unwelcome vision, the sacred edifice was set on fire.

Another missionary who had somewhat to suffer from the rebellion was Father Paquette. Riel having commanded him thenceforth to obey his orders in spiritual matters, Paquette not only refused, but left before daybreak to apprise the authorities of Fort Carlton of what was happening at Batoche. On his return at St. Laurent, he kept in hiding for a number of days several families who felt reluctant to participate in the rebellion. But, hearing of the Frog Lake massacre and being assured that his uncompromising opposition to the movement left him in a most dangerous position, he fled to Ile à la Crosse in the teeth of exceptionally cold weather, passing at Green Lake, where he deterred the Indians from pillaging the local store and emulating the other Cree bands in their revelry at the expense of the whites.

The sisters of St. Laurent had already endeavoured to escape to Prince Albert. They were now summoned to Batoche by Riel who treated them well. Yet, though they had not to complain of his men there assembled to the number of about 350, they were practically prisoners of war, as well as Fathers Végreville, Moulin, Fourmond and Touze, who had many reasons to complain of the treatment received at his hands.

THE MARTYRS OF FROG LAKE

Meantime, the Dominion authorities were not idle. Thoroughly aroused to the seriousness of the situation, they were sending to the theatre of the trouble troops which happened to be the very first passengers on the C. P. R. trains from the east. Winnipeg had also raised corps of volunteers who were hurrying to the Saskatchewan valley.

The halfbreeds were not without learning of the approach of the enemy. Neither were the impotent witnesses of their hopeless struggle. Father André, who had moved heaven and earth to prevent the outbreak, was now at Prince Albert, where most of the whites had taken refuge. Heedless of any feeling of revenge and foreseeing the inevitable, he wrote on April 18th to the commander of the advancing troops, General Middleton, beseeching him to spare as much as he could the poor deluded halfbreeds, advising him that very few among them were really guilty of any other fault than that of weakness in yielding to bad counsels, if not to force. He therefore begged Middleton to give them a chance of making their submission, a course which the general pursued as soon as he reached the place where they had resolved to make their real stand.

Many a time did Gabriel Dumont, who seems to have been endowed with no mean military abilities, manifest the wish to go and harass the advancing column, keeping its men in a state of continual alarm and nervousness by means of night attacks until they were demoralized, when a final blow would be

struck by the combined halfbreed forces. But Riel, who was ever against shedding blood, temporized, as if he had thought of winning without fighting.

At last Dumont could stand it no longer. April 23rd he left Batoche with two hundred men, fifty of whom he had almost immediately to send back on hearing that Batoche was threatened with an attack by the mounted police. In a ravine near Fish Creek the leader hurriedly constructed rifle-pits, the disposition of which betrayed considerable strategical acumen. Then, with a few picked men, he went a short distance farther and engaged the enemy in the morning of the following day. He performed prodigies of valour, in spite of defections from his ranks (probably of men who had been forced into the movement). The Canadians were 350 against 130 halfbreeds; yet the latter managed to inflict serious losses to the former, who had ten men killed or mortally wounded, while Dumont's force lost only two halfbreeds with as many Indians.[19]

But what with such disproportionate numbers and, on the Canadian side, machine guns and shells

[19]A. Begg is mistaken when he writes that "Dumont had 280 halfbreeds under him in the fight" (*Op. cit.*, III., p. 213). As we have already seen, the halfbreed leader did not reach Fish Creek with more than 150. He then went ahead with 20 tried men, with whom he engaged the enemy, and after the desertions which thinned the ranks of his main troop during his skirmish, and the defections of several of his own companions in the vanguard, it is doubtful if he ever had as many as 130 men in action at any time of the battle. All agree that the total numbers of the rebels at Batoche never exceeded 350. It would have been sheer folly to leave the headquarters of the revolt with only 70 men, when it was known that hundreds of whites were under arms at Prince Albert. Moreover, Riel was not sure of many of his men.

which penetrated into the most inaccessible retreats, the contest was altogether too unequal. Dumont, therefore, fell back on Batoche with such of his men as had remained with him.

Meantime, the band of Chief Poundmaker, whose state of dissatisfaction we have already noticed, had raised the standard of revolt, making prisoner Mr. J. Mackay, their farm instructor, who had been exceedingly kind to them. They then sacked the town of Battleford, whose population had to shut themselves up in the local fort. Everything was destroyed on the south side of Battle River, and as Father Cochin, the incumbent of Ste. Angèle, was known to leave no stone unturned to counteract the insurrectionary movement, two hundred rebels on horseback made him prisoner with some of his people, after they had pillaged and burned houses, appropriated horses, destroyed the Catholic chapel and stolen its valuables.

Hearing of this, and apprehending lest Poundmaker should effect his junction with Big Bear, Colonel Otter sought out the rebel forces, whom he surprised on April 2nd. He was at the head of three hundred men, and the Indians in arms were about two hundred and sixty. The Canadians had also at their disposal a Gatling gun and two seven-pounders, which did good execution.

As soon as Father Cochin saw the troops, he tried to take to them his fellow prisoners by a roundabout way; but, being mistaken for an hostile, he

was greeted by a shower of bullets. The battle lasted from 5 A.M. to 12, and such was the onslaught on the troops that it was wrongly surmised that some of Big Bear's people must have joined Poundmaker, and Colonel Otter had to withdraw. Here again the Indians repeated the fortunate blunder of the halfbreeds: instead of profiting by their advantage, their chief who, though a pagan, was more or less under the influence of the priest he had made his prisoner, cried out to his men to cease fire, because, he said, "if we shed any more blood, the Great Spirit will punish us for it."[20] The whites had eight men killed and twelve wounded, while, in spite of Begg's assertion that "there is no doubt the Indians lost heavily,"[21] only five of them fell dead on the battlefield.[22] Father Cochin buried himself a Protestant soldier. This affair has become known in history as the Battle of Cut Knife.

After this Col. Otter remained on the defensive at Battleford until he was joined by Gen. Middleton. The commander-in-chief had allowed his own troops to recuperate after the battle of Fish Creek, remaining in camp for several days, to the great annoyance of the people of Prince Albert, who could not under-

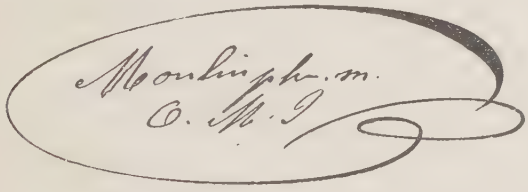
[20] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XXIII., p. 336.

[21] *Op. cit.*, vol. III., p. 217.

[22] We have this from a missionary personally acquainted with what he writes of, Father A. H. Bigonesse, O. M. I. (letter dated June 7th, 1885). Begg likewise over-estimates the number of Indians engaged in the battle, when he says that they were believed "to be over 500, including 50 halfbreeds" (*Ibid.*, p. 216, an evident exaggeration, even if we add to the number of the actual combatants the natives and halfbreeds they kept in captivity.

stand the cause of his inaction. Then a steamer arrived with a detachment of soldiers and a Gatling gun, and the general at last advanced on Batoche.

Useless to delay in a technical description of the long contest that ensued. During four days the half-breeds under Gabriel Dumont sustained the fire of an enemy five times their superior in numbers and provided with cannon and machine guns. Commenced Saturday, May 9th, the attack was vigorously repulsed, and it looked at first as if the assailants would have to give way. The halfbreeds were directing their fire from rifle-pits, the ingenious arrangement of which struck Middleton with astonishment and admiration. Then, on the 10th and



FATHER MOULIN'S SIGNATURE.

11th, the struggle went on with little damage to either side. This did not prevent Father Moulin from receiving (May 11th) a rebel bullet which caused a bad wound in his leg.

On the 12th, ammunition began to fail the half-breeds, who had to resort to pebbles and pieces of iron for balls. It was said at the time that Riel then wrote a letter of capitulation to Gen. Middleton, offering his own head as payment for the deeds of

his followers, but that he was prevented by a Mr. Swan and the young men from sending it to destination. However this may be, a vigorous charge of the Canadian troops dislodged the halfbreeds from their positions in the afternoon of the 12th, when more execution was done in their ranks than during the three previous days. Their total losses amounted to sixteen killed, among whom were a child and an old man of over eighty, with thirty wounded. The besiegers had only eight killed, half of whom were officers, and forty-six wounded.

Gabriel Dumont and others escaped to the United States. It is said that, had he so willed, Riel could easily have followed them thither; but he preferred to give himself up to the scouts. They found him, May 16th, and took him to Gen. Middleton, who handed him over to the civil authorities of Regina with most of his councillors.

On the 23rd of the same month, Poundmaker having heard of the collapse of the insurrection at Batoche, sent Father Cochin, who was constantly impressing on him the advisability of surrendering, to treat for peace with Col. Otter at Battleford.[23] With the priest were twenty-one prisoners the Indian chief was setting free as a preliminary to an understanding. Two days later Cochin returned to Poundmaker with a message from Middleton which

[23]It must be admitted that, personally, Poundmaker was not for unnecessary excesses; but his band had committed several outrages, going to the length of massacring the farm instructor of the Stoney Reserve, together with two other whites.

demanded unconditional surrender. This seemed rather hard on the victors of Cut Knife; but the instances of the priest made them yield (May 26, 1885).

Father Legoff had long been thought to have met the fate of Fathers Fafard and Marchand. He finally turned up as a prisoner in the hands of the Crees at Cold Lake. The backbone of the rebellion having been broken at Batoche, he, too, was deputed by his captors to negotiate terms of surrender. The answer was the same: no conditions.

This was in the first days of June. Big Bear held out longer. It was known that he had captured and was holding Fort Pitt. Like his confederates, he had a number of captives, among whom were some white women, and, in the light of the atrocities committed by some of his followers at Frog Lake and elsewhere, the worst was feared for them. But, with all the Canadian forces now available, his own capture was but a question of time. Hearing of the general failure of the movement, he thought for a moment of escaping the vigilance of the troops by making for the north when, on July 2nd, he was arrested at Carlton by a small detachment of police.[24]

[24]Neglecting the wounded, the casualties consequent on this ill-advised rebellion may be thus figured: Canadian soldiers who died in action or afterwards of their wounds, 39; halfbreeds and Indians killed in action, 29; massacred at Frog Lake and elsewhere, 12; executed at Regina and Battleford, 9. Total loss of life, 89.

CHAPTER XXXII.

RETRIBUTION.
1885-1886.

As a result of this ill-advised insurrection two Catholic priests had lost their lives; another had been seriously wounded; Father Paquette had remained in constant danger of death, and it was believed for some time that he had fallen a victim to the resentment of Indians and halfbreeds; Fathers Cochin and Legoff had been dragged from place to place by rebellious natives, who kept them under a standing threat of paying with their heads for their opposition to the movement; Father Scollen had likewise incurred what practically amounted to a sentence of death, though he managed to save the life of a Government courier; Fathers Végreville, Moulin, Fourmond and Touze had been kept prisoners at Batoche, and deprived even of the liberty of exercising their sacred ministry with the people that surrounded them. Finally, seven of the Catholic churches and adjoining missionary establishments had been utterly destroyed and their valuables stolen.

And yet such was the blind hatred for anything Catholic which animated the zealots who were ever prating about the influence of the French priests in

the insurrection of 1869 and distorting the facts of that movement out of all recognition, that they did not fear to lay the blame of the Saskatchewan rebellion at the doors of those very priests who "had done all that mortal men could possibly do to prevent it,"[1] and had become the first victims of it! It speaks ill for the love of truth and Christian charity which characterized even some ministers of the Gospel that they should have had the effrontery to ventilate in the public press those inventions of brains diseased by religious bigotry and racial fanaticism.[2]

So indignant were the victims of the rebellion that Father Leduc, as Vicar-General of St. Albert, deemed it his duty to set matters right in a letter he wrote in their name to the Toronto *Mail*, which was reproduced in *Le Manitoba* of June 25, 1885.

Had the eastern bigots taken the trouble to transport themselves to the theatre of the civil war, the contemplation of the ruins accumulated at all the

[1]Father Leduc, in *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XXIII., p. 434.

[2]To these cruelly unjust ministers the Rev. William Newton forms an honourable exception in his little book "Twenty Years on the Saskatchewan" (London, 1897). Mr. Newton, who is an Anglican clergyman, speaks from personal experience. After noting down many of the causes of the rebellion, which he puts to the account of the Ottawa authorities, he goes on to say of Riel: "He wanted to be a prophet, the founder of a new religion—a Moses on a small scale, who would lead his people into their own possession and drive out the nineteenth century Canaanites. He did not disclaim the murder of the priests at Frog Lake, and he separated the men under his influence, as much as he could, from the Roman Catholic Church" (*Op. cit.*, p. 90). Of Bishop Grandin and clergy the same author says: "On that and every occasion when I had met the Roman Catholic Bishop and his people, I am bound to say that I have received most graceful and kindly attentions" (*Ibid.*, p. 26).

Catholic establishments within the afflicted zone would have sufficed to disabuse their prejudiced minds. The loving heart of Mgr. Grandin would not allow him to wait for the end of the revolt. In spite of all remonstrances, he must leave St. Albert for the scene of the disorders, to survey the extent of the disaster, console the bereaved, and see what is to be done to remedy so great evils. As early as May 20th, he was leaving for Batoche when Col. Ouimet, of the 65th battalion, begged him to delay his departure, as he was fearful of its consequences among the disaffected of St. Albert and vicinity. But on the first of June he left after having sung a requiem for the victims of the war.

Impossible to describe the bishop's feelings as he visited the different places where the demon of discord had heaped ruins and ashes, and he beheld squalid Indians partly attired in priestly vestments stolen from the churches. Tears and sobs were for the big-hearted prelate an *obligato* accompaniment of all such visits. Yet he managed to preach repentance everywhere, had reparation ceremonies, and received the abjuration of such of the misguided Métis as had accepted the dreams of their irresponsible leader.

It is easily understood that his sorrow reached its climax when the ruins of the Frog Lake Mission reminded him of the great loss he had sustained in the persons of the two martyrs of charity. It also recalled to his mind the fact that, since his last voy-

age to Europe, he had lost "eight missionaries, of whom only two had died in their beds, the others having been frozen, drowned or massacred by the Indians."[3]

Yet, as the true ministers of a crucified God could not think of revenge, he spent the tenth of July in preparing a petition begging for clemency towards the prisoners, which he afterwards caused to be signed by the English of Prince Albert, and in writing several letters on the same subject to the Ottawa ministers.

These were no doubt instrumental in ultimately assisting Grandin's unfortunate people, now in chains; but they could not save the author of the rebellion himself. Riel's cause was taken up, July 20, 1885, in presence of Mr. Justice Richardson, with Messrs. F. X. Lemieux, Charles Fitzpatrick[4] and J. N. Greenshields, as defending attorneys. The accused was granted only half a jury, all of whom were English. The plea of the defence was insanity, and all the alienists who had time to examine him adequately on politics and religion declared on oath that, on such questions, he was of unsound mind. Those who were of a different opinion admitted that they had either seen him only for a short time, or not discussed with him the subjects which had led him to the bar of criminals.

Yet, on the first of August, the jury brought in a

[3] *Missions*, vol. XXIII., p. 312.
[4] To-day the Chief Justice of Canada.

verdict of guilty, with a recommendation to mercy. But the judge immediately condemned him to be hanged on the following 18th of September.

Tremendous indignation at the sentence was manifested throughout Quebec, and petitions were sent to the Federal authorities to have it commuted in conformity with the English jury's own desire, petitions which were offset by counter demands from Ontario and the Orange lodges throughout Canada, that the "arch-rebel," as they called him, be speedily executed. No person in his sane mind will deny that if this course was taken in preference to following the implicit direction of the jury before whom Riel was tried, it was not on account of the part he took in the rebellion of 1885, from which medical science absolved him, but because of the shooting of Scott, of which he was not then accused, and for which he had already undergone five years' banishment.[5] His own execution must therefore be looked at in the light of a miscarriage of justice. In spite of a perfect avalanche of protests and after two respites had been granted, he was executed in the morning of November 16, 1885.

Even his enemies admit that Louis Riel marched to death like a man, and Christians must be pleased

[5]Even the *Orange Sentinel*, the organ of Orangeism in Canada, practically admitted this in some of its articles, as when, for instance, it said (6th Aug., 1885): "We affirm that it is the Government's duty not to mind the recommendation to mercy, but on the contrary, the interests of the entire Dominion demand that the law be allowed to follow its course," because "he has committed a most detestable and atrocious murder on the person of a loyal Protestant subject" (quoted after a French version).

to learn that, after having abjured errors due to his overworked brain, he died like a saint. Father André had spent many weeks preparing him for the fatal moment. In the quiet of seclusion, his mind gradually got over his strange ideas, and he saw with clearness the wrong he had done. In the first days of November he wrote out his testament, as touching and Christian-like a document as history records, of which we regret our inability to quote more than the following extracts:

"Men having fixed the 10th of November next as the day of my death, and it being possible that the sentence will be executed, I declare beforehand that my submission to the orders of Providence is sincere. Under the influence of Divine grace and our Lord Jesus Christ, my will is ranged with entire liberty of action on the side of the Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I was born in her, and it is by her that I have been led into the way of grace. . . . I have retracted what I have said and professed contrary to her teaching, and I retract it again. I ask pardon for the scandal I have caused. I do not wish that there should be a difference between me and the priesthood of Jesus Christ as great as the point of a needle."

He then thanks in touching terms for their past benefactions his mother, brothers and sisters, as well as his wife and his friends north and south of the international boundary; after which he pardons with his whole heart those who have "persecuted

[him], who have without any reason made war on [him] for five years, who have given [him] the semblance of a trial, who have condemned [him] to death.'' Finally, after having exhorted his children to ''obedience to the Church, their masters and superiors,'' he addresses them in the following terms:

''I do not leave to my children gold or silver, but I beg God in His infinite pity to fill my mind and my heart with the true paternal blessing which I wish to give them. Jean, my son, Marie-Angélique, my daughter, I bless you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, so that you may be attentive to know the will of God and faithful to accomplish it in all piety and in all sincerity; that you may practice virtue solidly, but simply, without parade or ostentation. . . . I bless you that your death may be sweet, edifying, good and holy in the eyes of the Church and in that of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.''

At 2 A.M. of the very day of his execution, he wrote a parting letter to his mother, for which we regret to have no space here.[6] We also wish we could reproduce the details of his execution given by the Regina *Leader,* a paper which had previously shown itself constantly hostile to his cause. He was assisted on the scaffold by his confessor, Father André, and a Rev. Mr. McWilliams. ''Riel, then, in an affecting and child-like way, prayed God to bless his

[6]See Appendix E.

mother, his wife, his brothers, his friends and his enemies.'"[7] His last minutes on earth were an act of sacrifice, as he renounced, at the instance of Father André, the idea which he had entertained of making a speech. He died while reciting the Lord's prayer. His body was then taken to St. Boniface and buried in the shadow of the cathedral.

The other prisoners were tried in September of the same year, and eleven Indians were sentenced to be hanged on November 27th, three of whom were eventually imprisoned for life. The eight others embraced the true faith as a preparation for death, and, when executed at Battleford, they were assisted by Fathers Cochin and Bigonesse.

On the other hand, eleven halfbreeds who, before 1885, had enjoyed a most excellent record were sentenced to seven years in the penitentiary; three others to three years, and four to one year. We may also add that the Chief Poundmaker soon followed the examples of his congeners, being regenerated in the waters of baptism February 18, 1886, with twenty-eight other natives. Mgr. Taché graciously consented to stand godfather to the Cree chief. As to Big Bear, he was likewise admitted into the Catholic Church a short time later. Thus was it shown

[7]The *Leader*. Wolseley said of Riel: "He is a man of considerable moral determination, although all who know him say that he is wanting in physical courage ("The Red River Expedition," p. 214). His aversion for the shedding of blood was probably responsible for this last qualification. His end proved that, if Wolseley was a correct exponent of public opinion, that opinion was groundless.

once more that the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.

Thanks to the intervention of the archbishop, the prisoners were one after another set free after a few months, or at most a year and a half, of detention.

While events of such dramatic nature were bringing to God natives who had so far refused to hearken to the voice of his ministers, other Indians in less favoured surroundings, who had already heard that voice, were insensibly drifting away from the path of rectitude they had embraced. The lack of missionaries, the activity of their opponents and, above all, the undisguised aid the latter generally received at the hands of their co-religionists in charge of the different posts, who often continued the work of the ministers after they had left, and also the liberalities these ministers lavished on such as cast their lot with them, all these conditions conspired to try the constancy of the Catholic neophytes who lived, as a rule, in abject poverty. At Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie, and in a few places along the shores of Great Bear Lake, a certain number were gradually going over to schism and heresy.

The missionaries were the first to deplore these defections; but with their depleted ranks and extreme indigence, what could they do? One of them wrote that "while from Fort Wrigley (on the right bank of the Mackenzie) to beyond Fort Peel there are four Protestant missionaries, without counting

the Anglican bishop and a catechist, we are only two priests.''[8] On the other hand, though practicing charity as much as their limited means would allow, the Catholic priests were ever averse to any course that might be construed into an enticement to adopting the true faith and persevering in its profession.

Moreover, the votaries of heresy employed the most unlikely means to draw the benighted Indians to themselves. ''One of the new ministers has a big box full of crosses, medals and prayer-beads,'' writes Father Séguin, of Good Hope. The missionary to the Loucheux then adds by way of comment: ''Behold the devil who becomes a monk that he may the better deceive these poor people!''[9]

Nevertheless the priests were doing prodigies of valour, multiplying themselves, and gaily undergoing all sorts of dangers and privations. In May, 1885, Father Georges Ducot visited the natives of Keith Bay, on Great Bear Lake, after he had almost starved to death in the woods. Three of his dogs died of hunger, and he was himself reduced to the necessity of living on the fourth. That father was then stationed at Fort Norman, while Father de Kérangué helped at Good Hope Father Séguin, the apostle of the Loucheux. That same missionary was himself passing his life in constant danger of starvation, wresting, as it were, his daily bread by means of prayers and novenas to various saints in heaven.

[8]Father Geo. Ducot, 12th Feb., 1887.
[9]To Bishop Clut, 1st Feb., 1887.

Bro. Kearney, his devoted Irish companion, shared his poverty, and aided him with an occasional grouse or rabbit to eke out a living on those inhospitable shores.

In view of the inroads of Protestantism, Bishop Clut took it upon himself, in the absence of his superior (Mgr. Faraud) at Lac la Biche, to station a priest at Ste. Thérése of Fort Norman, which had so far been visited at regular intervals only. There Catholic interests were now all the more threatened as a Rev. Mr. David N. Kirkby, the son of one of the very first Anglican missionaries to the north, was known to contemplate establishing himself at that post.

This fort was already proud in the possession of an Indian schoolmaster "who wrote English badly enough and spoke it even worse. Each of his threats of resigning his functions was met by an augmentation in his salary."[10] The natives, who had at first embraced the true faith under the impulsion of energetic Father Grollier, had seen some of their numbers slip over to the sects, won as they were by the liberalities of the ministers. The chief of the Slaves, "himself a slave to his three wives and addicted to sorcery," writes Father Ducot, "had been the great instigator of this movement towards Protestantism. He confessed to me that he was far too generously treated by the ministers and received from them too many favours to think of abandoning

[10]Fr. Ducot in *Missions*, vol. XXIV., p. 423.

them. As for us,'' concludes the priest, ''we do not purchase souls with tea or sugar; we win them over by our labours and sacrifices.''[11]

This was in 1886. In February of the following year, the same party was writing, as an illustration of the fact that the missionaries' troubles began at home, that he had been ''deserted no less than seven times, under the most awkward circumstances, by *engagés* who had no other reason for their dereliction of duty than their dissatisfaction at the only fare he had at his disposal.''[12]

Before leaving the northern solitudes for more cheering scenes, we will share the devoted missionary's satisfaction in assisting at the departure, by the end of May, 1885, of Bishop Bompas ''of amusing memory,'' as he says, for Little Rapid, or Fort Wrigley, where, in spite of herculean efforts, ample promises and threatening words, he could not seduce the Indians, who preferred their poverty with the true faith to affluence in heresy.

We cannot close our chronicle of 1885 without mentioning a few more events, which the more engrossing drama of the Saskatchewan has led us to momentarily neglect. The first in point of importance, if not in chronological order, is the transfer of the St. Boniface College to the Jesuits. Archbishop Taché had long cherished the hope of handing it over to his own Congregation; but the Oblates are

[11] *Ibid., ibid.*, p. 424.
[12] *Ibid.*, vol. XXV., p. 365.

a missionary, not a teaching, Order, while it is admitted that the Jesuits are the most successful educators in the whole world. The 13th of August, 1885, was therefore a red-letter day for the venerable prelate: it witnessed the official transfer of his favourite institution to the famous society, represented by Rev. Father Lory and seven other fathers or scholastics as professors, assisted by four coadjutor brothers.

The first rector under the new management was a Frenchman, hailing from Auxerres, where he was born in 1830. Among his priestly companions was one who has since made his mark in the annals of the West, Father Lewis Drummond, its first prefect of studies.

Rev. Azarie Dugas having been freed from educational cares by the substitution of regular for secular priests at the college, was now at the disposal of his archbishop. He was appointed parish priest of the cathedral.[13]

We have next to chronicle the death of the very first Oblate within the limits of the archdiocese. For exactly forty years those missionaries had devoted themselves to the salvation of souls throughout that territory, and, in spite of severe labours and great privations, none had so far gone to his reward when, on August 4, 1885, Father Tissot breathed his last at St. Boniface. He was in his sixty-first year of

[13]We may also mention that in July, 1885, an excellent Catholic, Mr. L. A. Prud'homme, was appointed County Court judge.

age, a native of Côte d'Abroz, in Savoy, France, and had given thirty-seven years of good services to the West.

As if anticipating the departure for a better world of that good and faithful servant, another Oblate, young and willing, arrived at St. Boniface on March 15, 1885. This was Father Charles Cahill, who was at once appointed to the curacy of St. Mary's. Father Lavoie had administered that prosperous parish from October 1, 1882, to February 25, 1885, when Father Ouellette succeeded him as pastor and superior of the local Oblates.

The following year another death saddened the clergy of the archdiocese, but especially the community of the missionaries. Father Madore passed away September 13, 1886, after having spent eight years in the Middle West.

During that same year the duties of the episcopal office entailed for Mgr. Taché many displacements and long ceremonies, which became all the more fatiguing as the weight of years pressed more heavily on his shoulders. Pastoral visitations with attendant preaching and confirming, were unusually numerous during 1886. But these are simple routine work in the life of God's anointed; we cannot consistently give them the proportions of events in the history of the West Canadian Church. Moreover, with the completion (1885) of the transcontinental railway, travelling, at least within a certain radius, was now far different from what it had been. Hence

the numerous voyages of the archbishop to the east, in spite of his advancing age and infirmities.

These infirmities reminded him of the inevitable, and from time to time prompted earnest requests to Paris for an Oblate coadjutor. His prayers were long unheeded, and then explicitly refused.

Pending the appointment of a personal assistant in the discharge of his episcopal duties, the metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province which, in addition to St. Boniface, comprised the See of St. Albert and the Vicariates-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie and British Columbia, exulted in the contemplation of the progress made by the Church in those immense regions since his own arrival at St. Boniface, in 1845. Instead of being a mere dependency of Quebec, the same territory now formed four episcopal divisions. There were 24 secular priests within the same territory (from Lake Superior to the Pacific), as against 4 in 1845. Where at that date the Oblate Order counted only 2 members, it had in 1886 as many as 163, of whom 97 were priests. In 1845 the country had but 4 Grey Nuns; it now boasted 93, without counting 71 belonging to other institutions of women.

But the greatest contrast was perhaps afforded by the educational institutions under the control, direct or indirect, of the Church. In 1845 there were only 3 Catholic schools, with 120 children; in 1886 it rejoiced in the possession of no less than 120

such establishments with 4,517 pupils,[14] to which we must add a well-equipped college, which, under the direction of 12 religious of the Society of Jesus, was now entering upon an era of prosperity which was to go on increasing every year.

[14]With these last figures in mind, some especially endowed reader will perhaps be able to understand what Lord Wolseley meant when, in his "Red River Expedition," pp. 201, 202, he stated explicitly that the priests "hoped to mould the Red River into what they would have described as a peaceable, orderly and contented people, but which in the exact and cold-blooded language of Protestantism meant an *ignorant* and superstitious peasantry." In the light of the fact that the Church never changes her policy on educational questions, some will perhaps suspect that the favourite of Mars was telling a deliberate untruth, unless, of course, we surmise that, "in the cold-blooded language of Protestantism," the more you establish schools in a country, the more ignorant you want its people to be.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CONSECRATIONS AND COUNCIL.

1887-1889.

The event of 1887 for the Western Church was the solemn consecration of the cathedral of St. Boniface. Though commenced in 1862, the sacred edifice was not entirely finished until the above mentioned year. As it was of stone and now free of debt, two conditions required under the circumstances, Archbishop Taché asked Mgr. Fabre, of Montreal, to come and impart to it the supreme consecration the Church bestows on such of her temples as, by the proper requisites, preclude the possibility of eventual alienation from their sacred purpose.

The ceremonies attending such dedications are exceedingly long, and Mgr. Taché was unequal to the task of performing them. The entire population of St. Boniface turned out to witness them. During the solemn high mass which followed, three bishops were present, namely, Mgr. Taché, Mgr. Fabre, and Mgr. Laflèche, Taché's erstwhile superior at Ile à la Crosse, now Bishop of Three Rivers.

That event took place on September 18, 1887. Two days later Bishop Laflèche enjoyed a visit to his former parish of St. François-Xavier, on the Assiniboine. There he confirmed forty persons, whose

parents or grandparents had been his own parishioners in the heroic times of the colony. Then, September 22nd, he went with Archbishops Taché and Fabre to St. Norbert, whose brick church was likewise irrevocably consecrated to God, with the accompaniment of the same ceremonial as that which had been followed at St. Boniface. Finally, on the following Sunday, September 25th, took place the consecration of the church of St. Mary's in Winnipeg, at which a new prelate assisted, Mgr. D'Herbomez, Vicar-Apostolic of British Columbia, just arrived from Europe, where he had taken part in the General Chapter of the Oblates (1886). In each of the three ceremonies the consecrating bishop was Mgr. Fabre.

Soon after, Mgr. Grandin arrived at St. Boniface on his way to Ottawa, where urgent business called him. Despite the lessons it should have learned from the Saskatchewan rebellion, the Government of the Northwest was stooping to underhand means to discourage the use of the French language and diminish the influence of the Catholic missions within their territory. The two prelates consulted each other on those knotty points, and Taché requested his quondam coadjutor to solicit the assistance of their venerable brothers in the episcopate on behalf of the schools of the Northwest, for which they had already done much by means of special collections ordered to be taken in their respective dioceses.

With a view to forestalling the trammels of oppo-

sition which at times render so difficult the performance of good in a given line, Archbishop Taché had caused the nomination (December 21, 1887), to the post of Inspector of Catholic Schools of Mr. Albert Bétournay, son of the late judge of that name. A. Bétournay had made his studies in the college of St. Boniface, after which he had obtained his M.A. in the University of Manitoba. He spoke English and French with equal fluency; in spite of his youth he was therefore specially well qualified for that position. Yet, once that gentleman had reached Regina (February, 1887), he was kept at his desk like a subaltern, and allowed to inspect only what pleased those in power, and when it suited them to let him off.

Just then, as if to condemn the secret war that was already being waged against the Catholic schools in the Middle West of Canada, congratulations on their efficiency came from no less an authority than the official judges of the great Colonial Exhibition, which was (1887) closing in London. Mr. T. Bernier, the Superintendent of Roman Catholic Education in Manitoba, had sent to the metropolis copies of the daily exercises of the Catholic schools of the province, "not compositions prepared for the circumstance," he averred, but class exercises written or drawn as early as 1884, at a time when there was no question of an exhibition.

The Manitoban exhibit was universally admired, and the English newspapers praised it without stint.

The *Canadian Gazette,* of London, had the following in this connection: "The collection shows that there exists in one of the most recently organized provinces of the Confederation a school system which, while respecting the religious feelings and creeds of the people, imparts to all an education which can raise up to the highest rank in society the child reared under its auspices."[1]

Diplomas and medals were sent to the academy of the Grey Nuns at St. Boniface, to that of the Sisters of the Holy Names and the brothers' school at Winnipeg, as well as to the schools of the Grey Nuns at St. Norbert, Ste. Anne, St. Vital, St. François-Xavier, and the school of Madame Mulaire at Ste. Agathe.[2]

In granting those awards, the London judges were evidently mistaken; for, one who knew Manitoba well, Lord Wolseley, the veracious exponent of social conditions in the Red River valley, avers that the Catholics of that part of Canada were "devoid of education, except such as their priestly teachers thought fit to give them."[3] Unless, of course, we imagine that this priestly education bore fruits which commended it to the specialists of the metropolis, though it was not up to the standard of the great man who must be wrongly supposed to be more of a soldier than of a scholar. As poor benighted Taché, "clever wily bishop" though he was,[4] did not

[1]After the translation of *Le Manitoba,* 17th March, 1887.
[2]Dom Benoît, *Vie de Mgr. Taché,* vol. II., p. 567.
[3]"The Red River Expedition," p. 202.
[4]*Ibid.,* p. 200.

enjoy on those questions the great lights of Wolseley, he contented himself with those unequivocal marks of satisfaction on the part of the specialists of the British capital.

To that same year, 1887, must be referred the beginnings of the splendid hospital building that adorns the right bank of the Red, opposite the mouth of the Assiniboine. The increase in the population had rendered insufficient the building erected in 1877. Protestants, no less than Catholics, appreciated the kindness and devotion to duty of the nuns; therefore, May 15, 1887, the first stone of a large brick edifice was blessed by Father Allard, vicar-general, in the absence of Mgr. Taché. The good sisters were without funds; but Christian charity, solicited by the head of the archdiocese, came to their assistance: money lenders did the rest. On Sunday, October 21, 1888, such of the great pile as was finished was blessed by the archbishop in presence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and representatives of the best society in St. Boniface and Winnipeg.

Then, as the weight of years and the lack of a coadjutor rendered too laborious for the prelate the joint government of the Oblates in Manitoba and the secular clergy, who were becoming more and more numerous in his archdiocese, he obtained from Paris release from his charge of vicar of missions, or provincial superior of his brethren in religion, which Father Camper assumed in June, 1887.

We have already seen Bishop Grandin consulting his metropolitan on the situation of the Church in the Northwest Territories, as he was bound for Ottawa, where he expected to obtain the redress of his grievances. These were mostly based on the interference of the local authorities with affairs beyond their jurisdiction, and their partiality to the sects in the matter of the Indian schools. He had prefaced that voyage by a tour of inspection to some districts of his vast diocese, which had resulted in the selection (July 30, 1887), of a site for a church and missionary residence at Banff, a new hot spring station within the Rocky Mountains.

Then he had gone to Prince Albert, where he had witnessed the educational successes of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, successes which were then causing alarm among the sects, especially the Presbyterians. With pleasure and not a little wonderment he heard a young lady of English parentage and her brother, a boy of ten, recite French pieces with a remarkably pure accent. Both pupils were the children of the former Anglican Bishop of Prince Albert.

The lack of funds and the insufficiency of his personnel had forced Bishop Grandin to close momentarily the Indian mission of Cumberland. But the development of the Church's activity in the Calgary district fully made up for that temporary eclipse. Little towns, like Gleichen, National Park, Anthracite, Pincher Creek, were then springing up on all

sides, which were all the more in need of the priest's services as their Catholic population was not of the most fervent kind.

Calgary proper now enjoyed the good offices of twelve Companions of Jesus (first arrived July 26, 1885), who gave a superior education in English and French. Of the local priests, Fathers Leduc and André, one had usually to visit in rotation the above mentioned (and other) posts, while the Sunday work of the other consisted in the celebration of two masses, one of which had to be sung, with sermons in English, French, and sometimes Cree, Sunday school lessons of one hour's duration and a visit to the prisoners.

And as the population was growing fast, presuming on the assistance of Providence, the priests laid there the foundations of a stone church in the fall of 1887. The sacred edifice was to be in the Roman style, 120 by 50, with transept 70 feet wide, two towers and a fine cupola.

We must now revert to Bishop Grandin's voyage to Ottawa. One of its first results was the sending by the Federal authorities of Rev. Edmond Gendreau, O.M.I., with instructions to enquire on the spot into the objects of the prelate's complaints. This was a token of good-will which was appreciated. Another sign of the general Government's intention to remedy evils and curtail the power of the political personages responsible therefor, was the appointment of Hon. Joseph Royal to the post of Lieuten-

ant-Governor of the Territories. He was sworn in at Regina, July 4, 1888. The new governor then named as one of his three legal experts a Catholic, Hon. Mr. Justice Rouleau, and when he wished to consolidate the ordinances of the previous North-west Council, Mr. Amédée E. Forget, another Catholic, who had been clerk to that council, and was soon to become Deputy Commissioner of the Indian Department, was one of the two gentlemen to which the task was entrusted.

GOVERNOR ROYAL'S SIGNATURE.

Mr. Royal was himself a man of great merit. A writer of note in his mother tongue, French, he had long devoted his energies to the cause of journalism, after which he occupied several positions of trust in the Government of Manitoba. He was the author of the constitution of the Provincial University, of which he became the first vice-chancellor. To him was also due the first school legislation, which gave such satisfaction, and he was appointed the first Superintendent of Education for Manitoba. In 1885 Lord Lansdowne, Governor-General of Canada, awarded him a Confederation medal for services rendered to the cause of the Dominion.

"God is glorified in the assembly of the saints," says the Psalmist.[5] Hence, as the main object of

[5] Ps. lxxxviii. 8.

His Church on earth is the procuring of His glory through the salvation of souls, she has often recourse, as a corporate body or in her component parts, to the gathering of her chief pastors, meeting "in the unity of faith"[6] to deliberate on the measures necessary to the common good, such as may be prompted by the revolution of time. In doing so she feels sure of the Divine blessing, since her Founder Himself has declared that "where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."[7]

The ecclesiastical province of St. Boniface had now been erected for well-nigh a score of years; times were threatening, the religious horizon being overcast with clouds that bode no good. Moreover, the field of the Western Church had now acquired proportions, and her operations an importance, which required mutual consultation between her directing minds, to stifle abuses before they became serious and provide for unity of action. Hence, on Passion Sunday, April 7, 1889, Archbishop Taché summoned the first Provincial Council of St. Bonifact by letters addressed to Mgr. Grandin, Bishop of St. Albert; Mgr. Faraud, Vicar-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie; Mgr. Clut, his coadjutor; Mgr. D'Herbomez, Vicar-Apostolic of British Columbia, and Mgr. Durieu, his auxiliary.

Furthermore, under date May 30th of the same

[6]Ephes. iv. 13.
[7]Matt. xvii. 20.

year, the metropolitan convoked his own priests to a general retreat which was to be simultaneous with the sessions of the council. His clergy was now composed of 23 Oblate fathers, 8 Jesuits and 29 secular priests; in all, 60 priests. The opening of the council was fixed for the following 16th of July, being the 71st anniversary of the arrival at Red River of Messrs. Provencher and Dumoulin.

Bishop D'Herbomez being seriously ill, had commissioned Father Cél. Augier, Oblate Provincial of Canada, to take his place in the august assembly. Rev. Messrs. Cherrier and Cloutier were named general secretaries of the council; Messrs. Bitshe and Dabaudès, notaries; Messrs. Messier and Gillis, masters of ceremonies; and Fathers Allard and Lacombe, promoters.

The labours of the council lasted nine days, in the course of which official letters were addressed to the Pope, the General of the Oblates, the Governor-General of Canada, and other personalities or corporate bodies, such as the Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Pacific Railway directors, who were thanked for favours extended to the missionaries. July 18th, a solemn requiem was celebrated by Bishop Faraud for the repose of the soul of Bishop Provencher, whose life and labours were vividly retraced by Father Augier.

As a result of the deliberations of the venerable assembly, it was decided to ask for the erection of the Vicariate-Apostolic of British Columbia into a

regular diocese, and for the division of the diocese of St. Albert, whereby the territory east of the 169th degree of longitude should become a separate vicariate-apostolic. The advisability of having a representative of the western missions at Ottawa was also officially recognized, and the General of the Oblates asked to provide one. A number of regulations were moreover adopted concerning pastors and flocks.

July 24th, the council was closed by a solemn high mass celebrated by Bishop Durieu, and the promulgation of eight decrees bearing respectively on the sacraments, the education of youth, the Indian missions, the sanctification of the Lord's Day; episcopal jurisdiction; ecclesiastical properties, secret societies and Christian mortification.

It is related of the first Christians that, on the first signs of a forthcoming persecution, they sought strength and courage in the assistance at pious assemblies wherein the affairs of the local Church were set in order, and the faithful encouraged one another to constancy in the faith. The Catholics of Western Canada, through their respective pastors, had walked in the footsteps of their elders by holding the First Council of St. Boniface. They were now prepared to face the struggle which they foresaw they would have to undergo with the successors of the very Ontarian sectaries who professed such loud astonishment at the resistance of the Catholics to their aggression in 1869. The latter were now the

majority, and the programme whose realization had been put off twenty years by the intervention of Louis Riel and his halfbreeds was now again on the *tapis*.

Before we come to the persecution of 1890 and following years, let us pay a brief visit to the missions of the Far Northwest, where the malice of civilized man cannot as yet reach. At Lac la Biche, a mission which is now reverting to its original possessor, Bishop Grandin, we will see in July, 1888, Father Grouard packing up his printing plant for the Nativity Mission, where he finds Father Pascal in charge. That locality is destined to become his headquarters, after his sojourn at Lac la Biche and his missions on the Peace River.

To the south of Lake Athabasca another missionary leaves, in 1889, with ponderous tomes of manuscript. It is Father Legoff, who sets out for Canada, where he publishes six portly volumes, mostly in Chippewayan, "a gigantic production," declares a Canadian newspaper. Among the Blackfeet Confederation we find that Father Legal has left St. Paul for the Piegans to establish a new mission among the Blood Indians, leaving his former post to the care of Father Donat Foisy. In the Cumberland district Father Bonnald struggles with success against indifference and Protestantism.

Father Grouard has scarcely had time to settle down in his new post, when he is commissioned by Bishop Faraud to visit in his name the missions of

the Mackenzie. He leaves July 3, 1889, and, wonder of wonders, he covers part of the distance in a steamer lately built by the Hudson's Bay Company. On the 13th of the same month, he is already at Fort Simpson, where he finds Father de Kérangué at the head of the Catholic establishment.

Three days later, he reaches Fort Norman, where, in common with Father Ducot, he deplores the defections which Protestant liberality and a more indulgent moral system at times occasion in the Catholic ranks. On the morrow, Grouard hails Good Hope and with it two veterans, Fathers Séguin and Bro. Kearney, together with a new recruit, Father Giroux. Then he admires the church of Our Lady, which he styles "a little wooden jewel." All the Indians of the place are Catholics.[8]

On the 31st, the visitor is at Providence, where he enjoys Father Lecorre's hospitality, and meets also Father Roure, who has come from Fort Rae to see him. The Providence establishment, with its convent of seven Grey Nuns, *plus* four Franciscan Sisters lately arrived in the country, and its orphanage sheltering forty-five children of all tribes and languages, is a great credit to the Catholics of the north; but who can tell the cares and anxieties its maintenance entails!

In the following spring (1890), Father Grouard opened a mission for the Eskimos who frequent Peel River. He was aided by Father Lecomte, and the

[8]See Appendix F.

TRADING WITH THE ESKIMOS, PEEL'S RIVER

two missionaries were somewhat gratified by the results of their ministry. The priest destined for the new establishment was Father Lefebvre, who accompanied Father Grouard in a second trip down the giant stream of the north, together with Father Séguin and some of his Loucheux, whose faith and piety the visitor could not sufficiently admire.

The beginnings among the notorious pilferers of the Arctic were hard, and the priests had to beware. Yet even the hurried visits formerly paid them by Fathers Séguin and Petitot had taught them to respect the Catholic missionary. "The minister is a man like ourselves," they declared; "but the priests are the children of the sun."[9]

Side by side with the anticipations of ultimate results which buoyed up the founder of the new mission, we must mention the terrible famine which desolated the northern wastes in the spring of 1889. Everywhere natives fell, mowed down by the grim Reaper, and, occasionally, old people had to be abandoned to their fate by relatives who felt impelled to go on in the vain hope of finding some means of subsistence. When Grouard reached Fort Wriggley, the commander of his post and his man had been reduced to the necessity of eating part of their furs, and they were then living on roots.

More melancholy still was the fate of a whole Indian family of Fort Providence, who had taken to

[9] *Missions des Oblats,* vol. XXVIII., p. 448.

the woods in search of something to eat. This is how Father Giroux tells of their distress:

"We learned that a hunter was 'fasting' [i.e., famishing] at Lake Auray. Unfortunately we could do nothing for him. At the fort everybody had also been fasting for a long time, and the mission was nearing the end of its resources. In the course of April, the poor Indian succumbed, and his wife stationed herself with her children by the side of a trail, hoping that some dog-train would pass by and assist her. Poor mother! how long the days must have seemed to her when she beheld her children tortured by hunger without a piece of meat or fish to give them!

"Her two boys died first: this is inferred from the sepulture which her motherly hands prepared for them under the snow, just out of the tepee. Her two older daughters next succumbed, for the mother then lacked the necessary strength to take out their bodies and bury them. She must then have taken into her arms her little girl, a babe a few months old, and, pressing her to her breast, she probably attempted to sustain the spark of life in her. But, vain hope: the fountain of life was dried up. However, the poor frail creature must have survived the whole family; for, from her position when found, it was evident that she had struggled to free herself from the cold arms of her mother."[10]

If now, turning from those gruesome scenes, we

[10] *Missions*, vol. XXVIII., p. 453.

return to the south of the ecclesiastical province, our heart will be gladdened by very different events. In his zeal for colonization and Church progress, the metropolitan was just erecting new parishes within the territory immediately under his sway. These were Fannystelle, La Salle or St. Hyacinthe and Grande Clairière. The first was a French foundation due to the generosity of the Countess of Albufera. That noble lady had bought a large tract of land, on which a church, with a priest's residence and a school house, were built, between Starbuck and Ilets de Bois. Little by little settlers, mostly from old France, established their homes thereon, and in the fall of 1890 the colony received a resident priest in the person of Rev. Mr. Perquis.[11]

The second foundation was that of the La Salle parish, dedicated to St. Hyacinth in honour of the college of the same name with which were connected the ecclesiastics (Messrs. Beaudry and Dumesnil) who chiefly concurred in its establishment. It was canonically erected by Mgr. Taché, August 16, 1890, and Mr. Beaudry was its first resident pastor. A priest from France, Mr. Jean Gaire, was the founder of the third parish. In July, 1888, the intrepid colonizer pitched his tent twenty miles south of the railway station nearest to Oak Lake, and built a chapel which became the nucleus of Grande Clairière, the name given to the new settlement.

[11]The poetic name of the settlement was of the Countess' own composition. It means Fanny's Star, and was given in memory of a dear friend of its noble patroness.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.
1888-1895.

And now, with regret and repugnance, we must take up the subject of the great wrong perpetrated in 1890, an injustice and the beginning of a legal persecution which were to darken the last years of Mgr. Taché's life, and probably hasten its termination. One feels so loath to record instances of man's duplicity, crookedness and abuse of power! A Catholic might, indeed, find some sort of consolation in the thought that such intolerance and glaring injustice must be credited to a set of people who never tire of laying their own sins at the doors of his Church. But the comparison of the generous treatment accorded the Protestant minority of Quebec by its Catholic majority with the flagrant intolerance of the Protestant majority towards the Catholic minority of Manitoba yields little enough satisfaction to, for instance, the poor taxpayer who has meanwhile to provide with his hard-earned money for the education of the Protestant child, of no concern to him, and then for that of his own offspring.

As we have more than once seen in the course of the present work, the cause of education had ever been paramount in the counsels of the Church in the

Middle West. In this her authorities had been powerfully aided by the secular rulers of the land. One of the most significant of the first missionaries' instructions had been the following: "The missionaries shall take a special care of Christian education among the youth, and for this they shall establish schools and catechism courses in the localities which they may have occasion to visit." The same directions provided explicitly for the establishment, near Fort Douglas, of "a church, a house, and a school." We have seen these orders scrupulously executed wherever the priests penetrated.

It was likewise specified by the great Bishop Plessis, the author of these instructions, that these objects should be furthered by using to the best possible advantage the land which the founder of the colony was to give the Red River mission. Then, under date May 9, 1818, Lord Selkirk had explicitly approved of these arrangements,[1] thereby himself contributing to the support of the Church schools.

The Hudson's Bay Company which, some time after the noble founder's death, became the representative of the Crown directly or, later, through the Council of Assiniboia, followed in the footsteps of Lord Selkirk, aiding the Catholic, as well as the Protestant, schools by grants of land, free passages of teachers on their boats and subsidies in money,

[1] "Mr. Provencher has shown me the instructions and documents given to him; they seem to contain all that could be desired" (From a letter to Bishop Plessis).

which were known to be applied to a great extent towards the furtherance of Catholic education.

For over fifty years all the schools of the colony were denominational. On the other hand, as no regular taxes were levied for their support, it stands to reason that all the monies contributed towards Catholic and Protestant institutions (£100 yearly to the former, and still more to the latter) must have been meant to help on the schools no less than the churches of the two great religious bodies.

Furthermore, when, in the midst of the 1869 insurrection, the Canadian Government wished to set at ease the Catholics of Assiniboia, who thought themselves menaced in their religious and civil rights, and prepare them for the acceptance of the Canadian jurisdiction, the Secretary of State wrote them through Bishop Taché that the Government "would deeply regret if the civil and religious liberty of the whole population were not adequately protected."[2]

But everybody knows that, in the eyes of the Catholic Church, the child being the father of the man, his education must of all necessity be on a religious basis, and the State's only right in the matter is to see that he does not get an education that might ulteriorly prove detrimental to the welfare of society. There is no use in controverting these principles, which Protestants are free to reject as far as they are personally concerned: they constitute the Church's position on education, and for a

[2]Sir Jos. Howe, 16th Feb., 1870.

non-Catholic to prevent their realization among Catholics is tantamount to waging war on their Church, that is, falling into an open act of persecution.

Lastly, the Bill of Rights that represented the conditions on which the people of Assiniboia consented to be annexed to Canada—and into which they could *not* be coerced, as was recognized by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies[3]—contained as one of its clauses a demand for separate schools.[4] In answer to this the Manitoba Act, which became the fundamental Constitution of that province, expressly stipulated that "the said legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provisions: —Nothing in any such laws shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law *or practice* in the province at the union."

Article 16 of the Bill of Rights similarly asked for the use of both English and French in the legis-

[3] "Troops should not be employed in forcing the sovereignty of Canada on the population of the Red River" (Sir F. Rogers, 22nd March, 1870).

[4] It has been claimed by some that separate schools were not specifically mentioned in the Bill of Rights such as drafted at Fort Garry; but, as the Protestant historian Begg very aptly remarks, that document "called for the respecting of all rights and privileges, and if he [Mr. Ritchot], by instruction or of his own accord, chose to particularize that of separate schools, he can hardly be said to have exceeded his powers" ("Hist. of the N.-W.," vol. III., p. 397). But we have it from a most honourable party, who was a particular friend of L. Riel and knew Mr. Ritchot intimately, that the latter did not alter in any way the wording of the Bill of Rights, which was probably given its final and official form by the Provisional Government as representatives of the people.

lature and courts. This request was met by Clause XXIII. of the Manitoban Constitution, which reads as follows: "Either the English or the French languages may be used by any person in the debates by the houses of the legislature, and both these languages shall be used in the respective records and journals of those houses, and either of those languages may be used by any person, or in any pleading or process, or in issuing from any Court of Canada established under the British North America Act, 1867, or in or from all or any of the courts of the province. The acts of the legislature shall be printed and published in both those languages."

This double right, to separate schools and the official use of the French language, seemed therefore guaranteed by as solemn and explicit a compact as men could possibly devise. We shall presently see how the would-be representatives of tolerance and religious liberty treated it.[5]

The Hon. Mr. John Norquay, an able Scotch half-breed who had for many years held the helm of the Manitoban Government with success and perfect honesty, had been succeeded in his post of Premier by Dr. D. H. Harrison, a Conservative like himself (December 26, 1887). But such was the public excitement over some railway matters, that it was felt the new administration could not live unless sus-

[5]As early as 1879 a bill had passed the legislature, abolishing the printing in French of all the official documents except the statutes; but this was considered so plainly unconstitutional that it was never assented to by the governor.

tained in the St. François-Xavier electoral district, where Hon. Jos. Burke, the Provincial Secretary, presented himself for election.

The constituency was largely French and Catholic, and, in spite of his name, Mr. Burke was of that nationality and denomination, while his Liberal opponent was an English Protestant. The contest was therefore quite unequal, considering especially that it was suspected and broadly hinted that the Liberals stood for the abolition of French as an official language and even of the Catholic schools. A man from Ontario, Joseph Martin, since known as the stormy petrel of Canadian politics, whose word cannot be depended on,[6] was the right arm of Thomas Greenway, the leader of the opposition. Knowing that "strong efforts were made by the Government to induce the electors to believe that the Liberals were the natural enemies of the French and the Catholics, Mr. Joseph Martin and other Liberals with great earnestness repelled the charge, asserted that they were entirely in sympathy with the French Catholics, and distinctly promised that their language and institutions should be conserved."[7]

By means of this promise the Liberals carried the election, January 12, 1888, and four days later Mr.

[6]To cite but the latest instance of his ways, he left British Columbia, declaring his irrevocable abandonment of politics, and his first move in reaching England was to present himself as candidate at Stratford-on-Avon.

[7]J. S. Ewart, Open Letter to Hon. Mr. Greenway ("The Manitoba School Question," p. 220. Toronto, 1894).

Greenway was sent for to form the first Liberal administration of Manitoba. What then happened we shall relate in the very words[8] used by Mr. John S. Ewart, a Protestant Liberal, in an open letter to the same Mr. Greenway:

"To assist him in this work he [Greenway] personally called upon His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface. He found him too ill to meet him. At his [the archbishop's] request he made his communication through Vicar-General Allard. He proceeded to assure the archbishop that he was in entire sympathy with him upon the two questions of Catholic schools and French language; that it would be the policy of his Government to maintain them inviolate, and he requested that His Grace would name someone who would be acceptable to his people as a member of the Cabinet. The Vicar-General listened to his promises and request, and agreed to meet him in Winnipeg at nine o'clock the next morning. He did so meet him, then told him that His Grace was extremely gratified with his protestations of good will; that he believed that Mr. Prendergast had the confidence of his people, and that inasmuch as politics, apart from defence of his flock, were outside his sphere, no opposition would be made to the Government as far as he was concerned. He [Greenway] gave the same assurances to the Liberal French members of the House; and he was thus enabled to

[8]With only such changes as "you" into "him" or "he."

meet the general election with Mr. Prendergast as a colleague in his Cabinet, and several French Catholic candidates in his ranks. After the election he had as supporters five out of the six members.''[9]

The eminent lawyer closes his open letter by this emphatic declaration: ''These pledges have all been broken; and power obtained with the assistance of Roman Catholics has been prostituted to their overthrow.''

The Greenway Government commenced its campaign of persecution by an act of spoliation. In conformity with a clause of the school law which provided that ''each section of the board [of education] may reserve for unforeseen contingencies a sum not exceeding ten per cent. of its share of appropriation,''[10] the Catholic section of the same had amassed, by strict economy and even personal sacrifices on the part of its members and others, a reserve fund of $13,879.47. On July 12, 1889, the Greenway Government demanded that sum of Mr. Thos. A. Bernier, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, remarking at the same time that ''this demand refers only to a detail of internal administration, and in no way to the property of the amount indicated; the amount is decidedly a vested right and will not admit of a doubt at any time.''[11]

On the strength of that explanation, that fund was

[9] *Ubi suprà*, pp. 220, 221.

[10] Archbishop Taché, ''A Page of the History of the Schools in Manitoba,'' p. 31.

[11] *Ibid., ibid.*

handed in ten days later. But, instead of being credited to the department to which it belonged, or at least employed for an object cognate to that for which it had been amassed, the Provincial Treasurer counted it as one of the savings made by the administration.

The following month (August, 1889), a firebrand was sent west by the lodges in the person of Mr. D'Alton McCarthy, to inflame the popular passions against the Catholic schools, and pave the way towards the abolition of the same. McCarthy was tendered a reception by the Orangemen of Portage la Prairie. He then addressed a meeting, denouncing the separate school system and the use of French in the legislature and the courts. He further urged his hearers to unite in demanding the abolition of both anomalies, as he termed them.

Joseph Martin was present at the meeting. His most elementary duty was, of course, to protest against such proposals, since he owed the triumph of his party to the promise he had made to defend those very rights of the Catholic minority which were now assailed. But Martin emphatically endorsed the views of the speaker on both questions, though he acknowledged that "the Constitution may be against us."[12] That meeting was the signal for a violent agitation, which was kept up throughout the province by the representatives of the Liberal Government or its emissaries.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Greenway seems at first to have been reluctant to make light of his word spontaneously given to the head of the Church in the west. But the fear of forfeiting his position to Joseph Martin, his able but unscrupulous Attorney-General, gradually drew him into the vortex of the agitation, and he insensibly yielded.

His government at first gave it out that the dual system of education was to be replaced by a single department, under a minister who would be responsible to the people for the administration of the school monies. August 29, 1889, a convention of the Protestant board of education adopted resolutions deprecating the secularization of the schools, and advocating the continuation of a board with two sections. Then, as a protest against the new policy of the Government, Hon. J. E. Prendergast, Provincial Secretary, handed in his resignation, which was accepted in the first days of September.

Next, of its own authority, the Government ceased to publish a French version of the *Official Gazette.*

Meanwhile, a large number of petitions were being signed against the abolition of the separate schools and of French as an official language, which were presented to the House when it met January 30, 1890. Mr. Prendergast then moved a resolution condemning the Government for having stopped the publication of the French version of the *Gazette.* Though based on a most explicit text of the Constitution, this was defeated, all the English-speaking members voting against it.

Thereupon followed a long and most bitter struggle for the retention of the separate schools, in the course of which the six French members fought step by step the proposed establishment of a secular school system. One day one of them spoke for nine consecutive hours and a half; another, Mr. Prendergast, "made an admirable speech which won the applause of both friends and opponents."[13] Nevertheless, the new legislation abolishing what had prevailed ever since the inception of Lord Selkirk's colony, was finally passed March 19, 1890, by a vote of 25 to 11. Among the members who stood for the rights of the minority we may mention the late Mr. J. Norquay and Mr. R. P. Roblin.

This School Act provided for the creation of a Department of Education and the abolition of the Protestant and Catholic boards; it decreed the confiscation on behalf of the new school districts of the monies belonging to the Catholic schools, and forbade the giving during school hours of any religious instruction and the holding of any other exercises than those approved of by an advisory board, which was, of course, to be composed mostly of Protestants and to prescribe what suited Protestants.

Commenting on this vandalism, Protestant Begg cannot help asking: "Is a promise once given now to be broken? Is the mandate of the Imperial Government to respect the rights and privileges of

[13]Alexander Begg, "History of the North-West," vol III., p. 335.

the people at the time of union to be now set at naught?"

As a clear evidence that the Manitoban Government suspected they were throwing the Constitution to the winds we may note that, in the course of the debate on the abolition of denominational schools, they had inserted in the estimates an item for $1,000 destined to "constitutional litigation."

It seems in a way providential that such iniquitous spoliation was accomplished at a time when he who had been Riel's foremost antagonist in 1870, John Schultz, was Lieutenant-Governor of the province. The real aims of the so-called Canadian party before annexation to the Dominion became more clearly apparent by the fact that they were realized under the reign of its former leader—a further confirmation of the opportuneness of the stand taken by the halfbreeds in 1869 and a new vindication of Riel's course. The Lieutenant-Governor was requested to disavow the new legislation; but he would not entertain the proposal.

Three days later, a bill abolishing the use of French in the legislature and the courts passed the House by the same Liberal (!) majority. Then, as if anxious to show that the animus of the majority was really against the Catholic Church, they further decreed the suppression as legal holidays of four among the six Catholic feasts of obligation, which had so far been recognized by the State in Manitoba, as in other provinces of Canada. The two retained,

Christmas and Circumcision, were already observed by the Protestants throughout the province; hence they were not done away with.

The serious inconveniences arising from the suppression of the other holidays, coupled with the new school laws, are thus described by Archbishop Taché: "Supposing it is Epiphany or Ascension Day; the church bell will ring for the Divine office while the school bell will ring for the class; what will the Catholic teachers and pupils do? If they go to church, they will miss class and will be liable to incur the inconvenience of that infraction of school regulations. If they go to school they must have well-grounded scruples of conscience as they violate a very positive law of their religion, and by so doing fail in an important obligation. This signifies perhaps nothing for our separated brethren, who may say: 'the school above all.' But this signifies a great deal for the conscience of the Catholic who answers: 'religion above all,' and 'it is better to obey God than man.' "[14]

It need scarcely be said that these persecuting measures deeply affected the metropolitan of St. Boniface. He had worked like a slave by means of letters to the press and other writings to ward off the blow that was impending, going so far as to beg in person for the life of his dear schools of a politician who had two years before spontaneously promised that they would be religiously preserved.

[14] "A Page of the History of the Catholic Schools," p. 38.

Greenway was then accompanied by two of his fellow ministers; hence, to keep inviolate the secrecy asked of him, the archbishop forbore to mention the explicit promise made him through his vicar-general, that he might spare him the confusion that would have arisen in case he had revealed it before his two companions. We shall presently see how the politician was to reward him for that considerate generosity.

In the meantime, overwhelmed with sorrow and overwork, the prelate fell seriously ill, early in 1890. On the first of May of that year, he was writing to Rt. Rev. Father Fabre, O.M.I., that it was eighteen days since he had been able to stand up to celebrate even a low mass. Later on he grew worse, and it seemed for a time as if the same blow that did away with the Catholic schools in Manitoba was to kill him also who had practically been their founder and remained their chief protector.

His devotion to the cause of Christian education was so well known that the persecutors freely hinted that he and his clergy were alone in the struggle for their preservation. The principal laymen of St. Boniface, St. Norbert, St. Jean-Baptiste, St. Pierre, Ste. Anne and other parishes, therefore, thought it their duty to show the unanimity of the Catholic body in their revendications. They celebrated with unusual pomp the national feast of the French Canadians (June 24th), after which they held a congress the outcome of which was an emphatic declaration

of assent to the steps taken by their representatives in the House to protect their schools and language from the new vandals. They resolved that, if necessary, they would even burden themselves with a double tax "in order to keep up schools wherein their religious convictions should be respected."

The laity had spoken. It was not until three months later that the head of people and clergy sent out his authoritative protest against the spoliation of the rights secured by the Constitution. This he did by means of a mandement wherein he lay down with a masterly hand the Catholic principles on education and outlined the duties of his flock under the circumstances.

But the laity had not waited for these instructions to act. In the course of August, 1890, a petition asking for redress was sent to the Governor-General of Canada, which, in addition to some prominent names from the ranks of the clergy, contained the signatures of Messrs. T. A. Bernier, J. Dubuc, L. A. Prud'homme, M. A. Girard, A. A. Larivière, M.P., James E. Prendergast, M.P.P., Roger Marion, M.P.P., and 4,257 others.

Then, to test the validity of the laws of spoliation from a legal standpoint, an application was made to a local court by Mr. John K. Barrett, a ratepayer of Winnipeg, with a view to have quashed two by-laws made by that city to raise funds for school purposes. Mr. Justice Killam dismissed the same on the plea that the new Acts on which the by-laws were based

HON. JOSEPH DUBUC

Chief Justice of Manitoba

did not create a system of denominational schools, and because they did not compel any class of citizens to support other denominational schools than their own.

On appeal, Chief Justice Taylor and Justice Bain sustained that judgment, while Justice Dubuc (who had succeeded Justice Bétournay on the Bench, November 13, 1879), dissented. The case was then taken to the Supreme Court of Canada, whose members unanimously declared that the school laws of Manitoba were *ultra vires,* and therefore null and void.

CHIEF JUSTICE DUBUC'S SIGNATURE.

Thereupon, proceedings similar to those of the Barrett case were instituted, supposedly by a Mr. Alex. Logan, an Episcopalian, who complained of the public schools with the approval of the Anglican Bishop of Rupert's Land,[15] but in reality at the instigation of the enemies of Catholic education, who hoped thereby to embarrass the minority by a practical demonstration of the confusion its pretention would lead to if every denomination were granted schools according to its own tenets. But the political tricksters forgot the all-essential point that all

[15]Who, however, disavowed all participation in that case when he realized the aim of the politicians who had inspired it.

the sects, including the Church of England, had always formed a single section in contradistinction to the Catholic board of education, and that they could not logically claim more than was secured to them by the Constitution.

Be this as it may, the Court of the Queen's Bench held itself bound in this case by the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada concerning the Catholic revendications, and sided with Logan.

Thenceforth the endless controversies which had agitated the press became more and more acrimonious, and the Hon. Thomas Greenway so far forgot himself as to deny that he had made any promises to His Grace of St. Boniface. Therefore, the latter's vicar-general, Very Rev. Father Allard, declared publicly that said Th. Greenway had indeed called on the archbishop in the company of Mr. W. F. Alloway, banker, and that he, Father Allard, had received for the sick prelate Greenway's spontaneous and explicit promise to the effect that, 1st, the Catholic schools would not be meddled with; 2nd, the official use of the French language would be retained, and, 3rd, the French electoral divisions would not be altered. The same day Mr. Alloway confirmed it by a similar document on his oath, wherein he asserted that he "was present at the whole of the said interview and heard all that transpired between the vicar-general and said Thos. Greenway," and furthermore that "the account of

said interview as set out in said declaration of the Vicar-General is true in substance and in fact."

Meantime, the City of Winnipeg had taken up the case to the Imperial Privy Council, which annulled the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, in so far as the London tribunal decided that the Manitoba school legislation was *intra vires*. The noble lords based their judgment on the grounds that "Roman Catholics and members of every other religious body in Manitoba are free to establish schools throughout the province; they are free to maintain their schools according to their own religious tenets without molestation or interference."

To which we cannot help adding that if they were only free to refuse to pay double taxes, that is, for the public or Protestant schools as well as for their own, the whole difficulty would be eliminated.

On September 20, 1892, Mr. Bernier and the other members of the executive committee of the National Congress, to which we have already referred, addressed a petition to the Governor-General in Council, submitting that the time had come for His Excellency to consider the petitions sent by the Catholics of Manitoba for the redress of their grievances under subsections 2 and 3 of section XXII. of the Manitoba Act. These declare in substance that an appeal shall lie to the Governor-in-Council from any Act of the Provincial Legislature affecting any right or privilege of the Roman Catholic minority, and that in case no redress is afforded by said legis-

lature, the Parliament of Canada may make remedial laws therefor.

Analogous documents were signed two days later by Archbishop Taché, and, in the course of November, by himself, the president of the National Committee, the reeve of St. Boniface and 138 others, as well as by Mr. J. S. Ewart, counsel for the Catholic minority in Manitoba.

Before acting in the matter, the Federal Government submitted the case to the Supreme Court of Canada who, deeming themselves bound by the decision of the Privy Council, decided adversely to the claims of the Catholic minority. The case having been taken up to London and entrusted to the Hon. Edward Blake, the Privy Council now declared that the Catholics had indeed a real grievance, for which they were entitled to redress at the hands of the Parliament of Canada.

"Contrast," said the metropolitan judges, "the position of the Roman Catholics prior and subsequent to the Acts from which they appeal. Before these passed into law there existed denominational schools, of which the control and management were in the hands of Roman Catholics, who could select the books to be used and determine the character of the religious teaching. These schools received their proportionate shares of the money contributed for school purposes out of the general taxation of the province, and the money raised for these purposes by local assessments was, so far as it fell upon Cath-

olics, applied only towards the support of Catholic schools. What is the position of the Catholic minority under the Acts of 1890? They must depend entirely for their support upon the contributions of the Roman Catholic community, while the taxes out of which State aid is granted to the schools provided for by the Statute fall alike on Catholics and Protestants. Moreover, while the Catholic inhabitants remain liable to local assessment for school purposes, the proceeds of that assessment are no longer destined to any extent for the support of Catholic schools, but afford the means of maintaining schools which they regard as no more suitable for the education of Catholic children than if they were distinctly Protestant in their character."

This all-important judgment was delivered on the 29th of January, 1895. The Catholic minority lost no time in following out the course which it left open to them. Application was made for remedial legislation by the Federal Parliament.[16] The Conservative Government then presented for adoption a bill which was defeated, after deliberate obstruction, by the opposition under Mr. Wilfrid Laurier,

[16]To any fair mind the case was so clear that, when it came up in the Canadian Parliament, even Mr. Wm. McDougall, the would-be Manitoba Governor of 1869, could not help taking the defence of the people who had repulsed him. McDougall had been present, in 1870, at the passing of the Manitoba Act, on which the minority now based their claims to separate schools; hence he could speak authoritatively of the real intentions of the framers of that Act. He honoured himself by bearing testimony to their incontestable determination to grant the same, in answer to Clause VII. of the Bill of Rights, such as presented to the Federal authorities.

who claimed that it was not practical and promised to settle himself the question to the satisfaction of all. When, however, that brilliant politician had become Premier of Canada, he effected nothing but a sort of compromise which fell quite short of the Catholic aspirations, and was subsequently declared inadequate by the Pope.

CHAPTER XXXV.

NEW BISHOPS IN NEW AND OLD PLACES.
1890-1892.

This persecution of the Church in the Middle West was by no means restricted to Manitoba. We have already mentioned the difficulties constantly raised in the Northwest Territories by officials acting under the pressure of sectarian animosities. Emboldened by the audacity of the Manitoba politicians, they renewed their annoyances, which had been somewhat stopped by the complaints of Bishop Grandin. This necessitated another voyage (August, 1890) to the Canadian capital for the prelate, who had then interviews with several of the Crown ministers. He had prepared an elaborate memoir setting forth the grievances of the Catholics in the Northwest Territories, which it was his intention to publish. The promises of the Federal Government made him abandon that idea.

The great name of the metropolitan and the influence he enjoyed at Ottawa, an influence which had occasioned several excellent nominations to western offices depending directly from the central Government, rendered practically impossible similar vexations within his archdiocese. Under the immediate direction of Father Hugonard, the Indian school of

Qu'Appelle was pursuing its routine work to the satisfaction of everybody, while Father Prisque Magnan presided over the labours of the missionaries stationed at the mission of the same name. Over five thousand Catholics, of whom 3,750 were Indians, had to be attended to, who were divided into no less than seven nationalities, viz., French, English, Hungarians, Crees, Sauteux, Sioux and Assiniboines.

The Sioux, as we have seen, were immigrants to Canada. Under the guidance of Father Decorby, they were making fairly good progress in the path of Christian morality, while others were not so amenable to the ways of religion and civilization. At times, however, events of a startling nature combined with the missionary's exhortations to give weight to his words. For instance, a medicine-man —the priest of the devil among the natives—had started his incantations to conjure off a thunderstorm by mimicking some of the Catholic ceremonies. He was struck down by lightning with three or four of his assistants, a circumstance which was regarded by all as an intervention of the Divine wrath and a condign punishment for the sacrilegious performance.

The success of the Qu'Appelle Industrial School for Indians encouraged Archbishop Taché to establish, with the concurrence of the Ottawa Government, a similar institution at his very door. A few native girls were at first gathered at the provincial

house of the St. Boniface Grey Nuns, while a brick house was being built for the same object to the east of the same. This was blessed December 28, 1890, by the prelate himself; it received in the course of the following year Indian boys and girls in separate quarters. These were at first under the immediate direction of the sisters, who had the management of the institution. A Rev. Mr. Lavigne was their chaplain and attended to the spiritual needs of the children.[1]

In the course of the same year, 1890, the sad demise of one of God's anointed cast gloom over the archiepiscopal city. Mgr. Faraud, incapacited by his growing infirmities, had remained at St. Boniface ever since the council, and had resigned his charge of vicar-apostolic early in 1890. The venerable prelate dwelt in the vicinity of the hospital, in the company of Bro. Boisramé, who waited on him, and, for the last months of his life, of Father Pascal, his former subject, whom circumstances had brought to St. Boniface and who was soon to be sent to France. In spite of the care and attentions lavished on him, Mgr. Faraud sank rapidly, and in the morning of September 26, 1890, he breathed his last after an illness borne with admirable patience.

He was buried under the sanctuary of the cathedral after a solemn service sung by Father Camper in presence of Archbishops Taché and Ireland, the

[1]Early in 1896 the establishment was turned over to the Oblates, represented by Rev. Ambroise C. Comeau.

latter of St. Paul. Bishop Grandin's train having been late, that prelate arrived after the ceremony.

This death meant the choice of a new titulary for the Vicariate-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie. It was soon made: Father Emile Grouard, as able a business man as he had been successful in his career of Indian missionary, succeeded Bishop Faraud. He was named Bishop of Ibora, October 18, 1890, and preconised on the following 4th of June. Bishop Taché had himself raised him to the priesthood at Boucherville, May 3, 1862. Despite the precarious state of his health, he could not refuse to give him the unction which makes pontiffs. Bishop Grouard's consecration took place at St. Boniface, August 1, 1891, with Mgr. Grandin, of St. Albert, and Mgr. Shanley, of Fargo, as assistant bishops.

In the same consistory (June 4, 1891), another Oblate was proclaimed bishop, whose appointment betrayed the great strides the Church was making in Western Canada. This promotion resulted from the division of the diocese of St. Albert, which had been accomplished, after lengthy and laborious negotiations with Rome and Paris. Once the former had approved of it, the metropolitan sent (October 21, 1890), the names of the three priests who were deemed most fit for the post of titulary of the new vicariate-apostolic to the Superior-General of the Oblates, whom he requested to forward same to the Propaganda in case he concurred in the selection of the candidate.

Meantime the newspapers announced the division of the diocese as an event which had already been consummated, and implied that the name of the nominee for the new See had been sent to Rome. Now the appointment of an Oblate thereto meant immense responsibilities for his Institute. It was therefore but right that the head of the Order should have his word to say in the matter. Rt. Rev. Father Fabre, the Superior-General, felt it so, and, not knowing of Taché's letter, he addressed him one of those spicy communications of which he seemed to have the secret.

Received in the evening of October 30th, its contents banished sleep from the brows of the poor prelate, who got up at midnight and penned a letter of explanation whose humble tone deeply moved the heart of the Oblate General.

Father Fabre was now satisfied that the whole trouble was the outcome of a misunderstanding due to the indiscretion of the public press. Yet, to affirm his authority, he decided that, instead of the father proposed for the episcopate in the archbishop's communication, the name of Father Pascal, then in France, should be submitted to Rome for the position.

In consequence, that missionary was appointed Bishop of Mosynopolis and Vicar-Apostolic of the Saskatchewan, on April 19, 1891, and consecrated June 29th[2] of the same year, in the cathedral of

[2]Not the 5th, as Dom Benoît has it in the second volume of his valuable *Vie de Mgr. Taché*, p. 635.

Viviers, France, the very place where his metropolitan had himself received the episcopal unction. His territory had for limits: in the north, the Arctic Sea; in the west, the 109th degree of longitude and the Vicariate-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie; in the south, the civil province of Manitoba and part of Alberta, and in the east, Hudson Bay, Nelson River and the western shore of Lake Winnipeg as far as the boundaries of Manitoba.

The new prelate was born at St. Genest de Beauzon, in the department of Ardèche, France, August 3, 1848, and studied at Viviers and Aubenas. We have already seen him arrive in Western Canada in the course of 1870. He made his novitiate at Lachine, near Montreal, pronouncing his final vows September 27, 1873. He was admitted to the priesthood the following first of November. In 1874 he commenced his apostolic ministry, which was to have for its theatre mostly the shores of Athabasca and Great Slave Lakes.

Another event of a consoling character, especially for the sensitive heart of Mgr. Taché, was the visit, in October, 1891, of the Very Rev. Father Martinet, one of the four assistants of the Oblate General. For a number of years the acts and intentions of the archbishop had occasionally been viewed in an unfriendly light at Paris, the seat of the General Administration of the Order. Mgr. Taché was deeply attached to his Institute; he therefore suffer-

ed deep anguish at perceiving that he did not possess the full confidence of its head, and he longed for verbal explanations.

Unfortunately a journey to Paris had become for him a sheer impossibility. Through the kind offices of Father Langevin, the representative of the Oblate General, on an official visit to eastern Canada, was persuaded to push as far as St. Boniface. The result of the meeting of the two great Oblates was a complete vindication of Taché's course and a reversal of feelings on the part of the visitor. The lifting of the clouds of misunderstanding was an immense relief for the former.

The year 1891 had just seen the building of a railway line from Calgary to Edmonton. This was much appreciated by the St. Albert missionaries, who were at length brought within measurable distance of civilization. It also considerably benefited its northern terminus, Edmonton, which, from a Hudson's Bay Company trading post and entrepôt for the north, was soon to become a city, prior to its being selected as the capital of a new province.

The locality had never been neglected by the religious authorities. Even in the balmy days of Ste. Anne's, it had been linked thereto by some sort of spiritual tie, being then placed under the patronage of St. Joachim, the spouse of Mary's mother. In 1881 the Hudson's Bay Company having divided into town lots part of their land round the fort, Father Leduc bought a block, on which a modest

building 30 by 24 was erected, the first floor of which did duty as a chapel, while the priest lodged in the second. This church-house was put up in 1882. From that year, therefore, dates the establishment of a permanent missionary station at Edmonton. However, no priest had resided more than a few months in the new quarters when Father Henri Grandin, a nephew of the Ordinary of the diocese, took charge of the place, October 1, 1883.

In the course of 1891 were also laid the foundations of another centre of population in the Far West. This was Morinville, named after its founder, the Rev. Jean-Baptiste Morin, a French Canadian priest hailing from Montreal. The new locality was situated 22 miles north of Edmonton, and the first settlers of the whole region arrived on the spot in the spring of 1891. So successful was the undertaking that, three years later, Morinville possessed a church which, though not a paragon of architectural beauty, betokened by its dimensions an already large population. To-day it is an industrial, as well as an agricultural, centre.

Not only Morinville, but also Beaumont, Végreville, St. Emile of Legal, and Saint Edmond, or Rivière-qui-Barre, owe their existence to the exertions of Mr. Morin. During ten years that gentleman proved a most successful colonization agent and organizer. Végreville was so called by him after the veteran Oblate of the same name to whom numerous references have been made in the course of

this work. Its first settlers were French Canadians from Kansas. They reached the valley wherein the town now stands on May 2, 1894. On July 14th of the same year the first church service was held there, and in the spring of the following year the new settlement boasted a post-office.

Végreville is on the Canadian Northern Railway, east of Edmonton. On the line of the C. P. R. we first find Lacombe and Leduc, whose names stand out on the map of Alberta as silent witnesses to the consideration the Church's ministers enjoyed in the Far West when the Calgary-Edmonton line was built. Some time in 1890, Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney established, twenty miles south of Edmonton, a telegraph station to which he gave the name of Vicar-General Leduc, O.M.I. With the advent of the railway, this developed into an important town, which possesses a Catholic church.

More important still is Lacombe, which owes its origin and name to the C. P. R. authorities.[3] The stations with aboriginal vocables on the same line were, in a sense, christened by Father Lacombe, though, as a matter of fact, the application of the same was the result of an accident. The veteran missionary had been asked by the railway officials to furnish a list of the Indian names applied to a number of points where the establishment of sta-

[3]While Morinville and Végreville have long had resident priests, Lacombe and Leduc have only modest churches attended once a month from Wetaskiwin, the greater part of their population being Protestant.

tions was contemplated. He complied with the request; but, by a strange oversight, the order in which the native terms had been written was reversed, those intended for the northern end of the line being made to designate points in the south, and *vice versâ*.

All those foundations were within Grandin's domains. Additions to the already existing parishes within the territory of the metropolitan were just then (1891) being made, while a new religious Order was introduced in the west. On May 14, 1891, Dom Paul Benoît, a Regular Canon of the Immaculate Conception, accompanied by three of his brethren, as well as a first contingent of French and Swiss settlers, was commencing the establishment, in the Pembina mountain, to the north of St. Léon, of a parish which was put under the patronage of Our Lady of Lourdes. The following year, other colonists made their way to some seventeen miles in the northeast, near the Rivière des Iles de Bois of the French halfbreeds. The new settlement received the name of St. Claude, and was regularly visited by the religious of Notre-Dame de Lourdes.

In 1892 a priest was appointed from St. Boniface to a third centre of recent foundation. Belgians and others from Europe, as well as some French Canadians, had established their homes in the vicinity of St. Alphonse. They were constituted into a distinct parish, which was called Bruxelles, and Rev. Mr. Willems named to watch over their religious

interests. His temporary lodgings, which also served as a chapel, were consumed by the flames in November, 1893, but replaced on the 8th of the following month by others which had for some time been under construction.

Nearer St. Boniface, a very different institution, due mostly to the liberality of Mgr. Taché and Rev. Mr. Ritchot, the parish priest of St. Norbert, was implanting itself by the banks of the Sale River, some ten miles from the archiepiscopal city. This was a monastery of Trappists, which was erected, at first on a very modest scale, during the summer of 1892. It was solemnly blessed by the metropolitan, October 18th, and placed under the patronage of the Mother of God with the beautiful title of Our Lady of the Prairies. The outward occupations of the newcomers were soon to result in a sort of model farm, and became to the neighbouring halfbreeds a much needed example of generous labours in the fields.

Meanwhile, other priests devoted themselves exclusively to the salvation of souls as pastors of new communities. Though their lot could scarcely be compared with that of the heroic missionaries of the Far North, privations, and even at times dangers, were by no means absent from the prosecution of their ministry. Witness, for instance, the sudden termination of Rev. Mr. Graton's career. Mr. Damien Graton had become parish priest of Regina early in the summer of 1886. In the first days of

March, 1891, he left on a tour of inspection of some outlying settlements. On his way back, it became evident that the thickness of the snow and consequent fatigue of his horses rendered further progress impossible. This was on Saturday, March 7th. As his services were imperatively demanded at Regina, he sent his man for other horses; but when the latter returned, the priest was found in a dying condition. Startled at the sight, his companion rushed back to town for a doctor who, on reaching the stricken missionary, found him dead.[4]

Rev. Joseph Caron, who providentially came west a few months after the melancholy event, succeeded Mr. Graton, August 25, 1891, in the charge of the parish. An exceptionally able man was the new incumbent; yet no degree of ability seemed a match for the wiles of the Northwest Territories politicians. Under the deleterious influence of those in power at Winnipeg, new school legislation was soon (1892) introduced by the Hon. Mr. W. G. Haultain, which, more hypocritical than that of Manitoba, was no less effective in setting at naught the right Catholics had so far enjoyed of educating their children according to the dictates of their conscience. That legislation created the strange spectacle of supposedly Catholic schools directed and managed

[4]Rev. D. Graton was born at St. Martin, P.Q., on the 11th of Sept., 1858, and made his studies at Ste. Thérése and in the Montreal Seminary. He was ordained March 25, 1882, and served one year and a half as private secretary to Archbishop Fabre, after which he was appointed assistant to the parish priest of Ile Bézard, and then to that of Pointe Claire, whence he left for the West.

by Protestants, according to Protestant ideals, with the help of only such books as were approved of by Protestants. Taché and Grandin, in common with their ablest missionaries, strenuously protested to Ottawa against such a pernicious anomaly; but their complaints remained unheeded.

Nay, that policy of trifling with the conscience of the people was even extended to the native population. The penning up of the Indians within definite reserves, guarded by bodies of mounted police, had resulted in swarms of Protestant preachers, who manifested a sudden zeal for the wards of the Canadian nation, and would fain have reaped where others had sown. Despite the numerical majority of the Catholic Indians, those new missionaries were everywhere favoured at the expense of the priests, and, as an excuse for that partiality, statistics were falsified in such a way as to show an exaggerated number of Protestants on the Indian reserves.

Thus, to speak of only one limited area which was admitted to be an exceptionally favourable field for Protestant proselytism, the Gordon reservation counted 18 Catholics and 36 pagans, yet was labelled as entirely Protestant in the Ottawa Blue Books. That of Poor-Man had 9 Catholics and only 4 Protestants, all the other natives thereon being heathens; but Ottawa accepted reports from interested parties which described it as wholly Protestant. Day-Star Reserve did not contain a single Protes-

tant, though its inhabitants were officially represented as being all of that faith.[5]

However, even with the help of those unreliable figures, only a majority of less than 1,100 could be marshalled on behalf of the "reformed" faith among the natives of the entire west—exclusive of the north, where, in spite of the defections we have occasionally mentioned, the Catholics still formed the immense majority among the Indians. The *official* figures for the dioceses of St. Boniface and St. Albert, as well as for the Vicariate-Apostolic of the Saskatchewan, were 7,951 Catholic Indians against 9,040 native Protestants. Nevertheless, within the same territory there were at the time only three Catholic Indian agents against twenty-four who professed the Protestant faith under its multifarious forms. This enormous disproportion rendered the non-Catholic officials all the bolder in their antagonism to the Catholic missionaries.

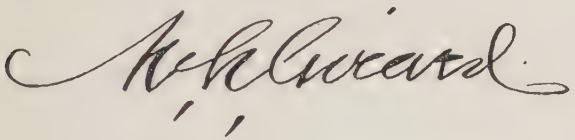
To offset, in a very limited degree, the sadness of such a situation, we may now mention the erection of a new church for the Winnipeg parish of the Immaculate Conception and of a cathedral at Prince Albert. The corner-stone of the former was blessed by Archbishop Taché on May 8, 1892, and the church was opened for Divine service on March 17th of the following year. This is the pretty edifice which now graces the environs of the C. P. R. station.

The corner-stone of the Prince Albert cathedral

[5] *Missions des O. M. I.*, vol. XXXIII., pp. 280, 281.

was blessed on May 22, 1892, by the same prelate, accompanied by a galaxy of Church dignitaries from the east, among whom were Archbishop Duhamel, of Ottawa, and Bishop Laflèche, of Three Rivers, together with the new bishop, Mgr. Grouard. The sacred edifice was to be of brick on a stone foundation, 96 feet by 50.

Another consoling event was the holding of the National Congress and the adoption of the strong



SENATOR GIRARD'S SIGNATURE.

measures of protestation against the Manitoba school laws which we have already mentioned. But even then joy was not unalloyed for the Catholics: its president, Senator Girard, passed away at St. Boniface, September 12, 1892, almost immediately after protesting against the laws of spoliation. Marc A. Girard was one of the most remarkable in the phalanx of superior laymen with whom Mgr. Taché had surrounded himself after the troubles of 1869-70.[6] Mr. Thomas A. Bernier was appointed,

[6]He was born at Varennes, Quebec, on the 25th of April, 1822, and studied at the College of St. Hyacinthe at the same time as the future Archbishop of St. Boniface. He was the Reeve of his native town, when, in 1870, he left for the West in company with that prelate. Our readers have now some knowledge of the honourable rôle he played there.

October 26, 1892, to succeed him in the Dominion Senate.

Another appointment for which the archbishop was ever longing was that of a coadjutor to share the burden of the administration of his immense diocese. As we have already seen, his heart's desire had been to get an Oblate for a successor; but, after long hesitations on the part of the General Administration of his Order, his instances had been met with an explicit refusal, for which past misunderstandings were no doubt partly responsible. These being now cleared away by Father Martinet's visit, Mgr. Taché thought it expedient to resume negotiations to the same end.

This time success crowned his efforts. In so far as the Oblate General was concerned, Father Langevin, then at Ottawa, was ceded to the venerable archbishop, with permission to have him presented to the Roman authorities for the post of coadjutor with the right of future succession. He was to leave as soon as possible for Manitoba, there to exercise at first the functions of vicar of the Oblate missions and make himself known to his future diocesans. But on the heels of the successful termination of the prelate's negotiations came the news of Father Fabre's death, which occurred on October 26, 1892. As a consequence, Father Langevin stayed at Ottawa pending the election of a new Superior-General.

The choice of the General Chapter fell on the Rev.

RT. REV. JOS. FABRE

Second Superior-General of the Oblates

Louis Soullier, May 11, 1893, and, on the following first of July, Father Langevin arrived at Winnipeg with the title of superior of St. Mary's house and of vicar of all the Oblates under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Mgr. Taché.

This was a precious acquisition for the pioneer missionaries of the Northwest. Unfortunately the joy consequent on this accession to their ranks was but too soon tempered by an accident which cost the life of one of their veterans. After forty-five years of missions and other services in the west, Father Maisonneuve, who had for a long time been afflicted by an almost complete deafness, was struck, July 21st, by a railway train, and died of his injuries on the 28th of the same month.

In spite of his age and infirmities, the deceased had for a long time been filling the post of procurator, or manager of the finances, of the archdiocese and of the Vicariate-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie, making all the purchases for the distant missions of the latter and forwarding the same to destination. Hence his position was far from being a sinecure. He was advantageously replaced by Father Joseph U. Poitras, O.M.I., who arrived at St. Boniface on October 8, 1893, after having filled for an already long period a similar post in the east.

But Mgr. Taché was not the only western prelate whose apostolic field was visited by the grim Reaper. In the beginning of 1893, Mgr. Grandin had been

astounded to learn of the death, on the same day (January 10th), of such veterans as Fathers Alexis André and Victor Bourgine. The former expired at Calgary, the latter at St. Albert. Both had passed most useful careers among Indians and whites, and universal regret followed them to the grave.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP TACHE.
1892-1895.

While some of the pioneer missionaries were thus going to their reward, younger recruits walked in their footsteps, penetrating even to the dreary shores of the Polar Sea. In the course of 1892, Father Camille Lefebvre was stationed at the mission of the Holy Name of Mary, on Peel River, whence he attended to the spiritual needs of the hyperborean aborigines. Hearing of the forthcoming visit of a Protestant clergyman to his Eskimo flock, he embarked for the sea coast on July 22nd, in the *oomiak* (whaleskin bark) of a chief named Toreatsiark (Crooked Eyes).

The trip furnished him with a new illustration of the miserable lot of woman in pagan society. Describing the craft he used, the missionary says: "I occupied the place of honour by the side of my adopted father [his host and protector, Toreatsiark]; the dogs had the second place, and the women the third. It was not without reason that the latter were so placed; for it is to them that is reserved the task of wielding the big oars from morning to evening."[1]

[1] *Missions*, vol. XXXII., p. 168.

Going down the Peel and the Mackenzie, the little party reached, July 30th, the Eskimo village, situate on an island laved on the one side by the waters of the great northern stream and on the other by the waves of the Polar Sea. The natives were in high glee, as a result of a total catch of fifteen white whales. Hence the missionary was well received.

He had been a week trying to instruct the people when the canoe of the Protestant clergyman was sighted. The Eskimos had hitherto proved neither fervent nor eager for instruction; but the coming of the minister forced them to take sides with the one or the other. They decided in favour of the priest, whom they twice asked to speak of "the Man on the cross he was wearing at his belt." Father Lefebvre complied as best he could with the limited command of their language he possessed. But when it became a question of baptizing the children, none were presented for the sacramental rite.

Then when, on August 15th, the Eskimos commenced to scatter in search of reindeer and fur-bearing animals, the missionary was confronted by a difficulty with which most of his northern co-workers are familiar, and which on that account it may be advisable to relate in some detail.

He was told that nobody intended to go up to the fort on the Peel. There he was, therefore, without means of returning to his home, a stranger stranded on a lonely island of the Polar Sea which was soon to become a perfect desert. What was he to do?

Suddenly he remembered that, about thirty miles up the river, a few Loucheux Indians were camped: if he could only find somebody to convey him thither! Luckily he learned of some Eskimos going in that direction. He embarked with them, only to find the Loucheux gone!

But dint of coaxing and offering high wages, the priest finally succeeded in engaging the services of an Eskimo family—those aborigines never travelling singly. It was on the 19th of August. To the anxieties of the previous days now succeed joy and hope in the heart of the forlorn missionary; but neither is of long duration. On the 20th, Lefebvre gets up bright and cheerful at the thought of leaving at last for his home, whither urgent business calls him. But he counts without his host.

"If you do not add so much to the promised wages, I shall not go," declares the latter.

The priest is at his mercy; what can he do but yield under protest and beg for an immediate departure? But Mr. Eskimo is in no hurry.

"We shall not leave until to-morrow," he says.

On the morrow, it is the same refrain over again. The missionary had to wait until the 24th. Then, after two days' nonchalant travelling, his man thought he would enjoy a well-deserved rest, inasmuch as some sort of a breeze was rippling the surface of the water. By this time Father Lefebvre was out of patience and perfectly disgusted.

"Since you evidently do not intend to take me

to the fort, I shall have to perform the journey on foot,'' he remarks.

Whereupon, loud protestation on the part of the wily Eskimo, who probably expects a further augmentation in his wages.

''What!'' he exclaims, ''to walk such a distance without a trail? No man alive could do it, especially as the fort is still very, very far.''

But experience had taught the priest that he could not count on such a man. Therefore, with six lean fishes, two pounds of flour, and dried meat for one meal, Lefebvre sets his back on his unfaithful canoeman, and starts for the fort, 150 miles distant.

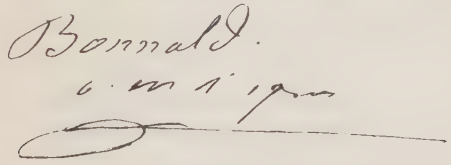
To adequately describe the fatigues of the route he then had to follow is simply impossible. This was nothing but the bank of the river, steep and precipitous in many places, when he had not to force his way through bushy willows and across deep ravines and affluents of the river. The missionary would certainly have succumbed to the task had he not, by the merest chance, met after one day's journeying a Loucheux tent, the inmates of which were at first tempted to take him for a ghost, and who consented to convey him to his home, out of a sense of Christian duty and as an implicit protest against the conduct of the hated Eskimos.

A different kind of trial was then afflicting Father Bonnald, the veteran of the Cumberland missions. All the camps of the Protestant Indians within the Hudson Bay basin were echoing the news that he

had become mad, and, casting off his cross, had fled in the direction of the "great countries," Europe. Even his own people in distant parts were momentarily deceived and immensely aggrieved on hearing the startling news.

The truth no sooner became known than the natives themselves were stricken by an epidemic complaint which played havoc among them. On November 18, 1893, Bonnald received a roll of birch bark on which was written in syllabic characters a missive of which the following is a translation:

"My Prayer Chief and Father in God. My heart is broken because I cannot see thee; my eyes pour



FATHER BONNALD'S SIGNATURE.

forth torrents night and day at the thought that I shall see thee no more here below. What a pity for my soul that thou art not here to wash and cleanse it with thy prayer! Farewell, Father, I kiss that hand which so often blessed me and placed Jesus on my tongue. I do not think I have as yet lost Jesus. I hope that, in his mercy, he is going to take me to himself. Pray thou much for me. I who write to thee am the poor little dog, John Bighetti."[2]

Other scenes again greet us on Lake Athabasca

[2] *Missions*, vol. XXXII., p. 51.

and the Mackenzie River. There material progress in a most unexpected form is timidly feeling its way towards the Catholic missions. Hitherto one of the chief drawbacks had been the exorbitant sums the northern stations had had annually to pay the Hudson's Bay Company for the transportation of their outfits. Bishop Grouard had received in Europe alms which allowed him to get the machinery of a much needed sawmill of moderate dimensions for his mission on Lake Athabasca. With the help of Bro. Lavoie, he conceived the idea of applying this to the propelling of a small steamer. But, after a trial on the swift outlet of the lake, it became evident that the motor was too weak. Aided by generous friends of the missions, the progressive prelate bought more powerful machines and finally succeeded in his enterprise, thereby saving an enormous sum to his poor missions.

By this time, the veteran Mgr. Clut was ailing so seriously that it was deemed expedient to send him east for treatment. He left his beloved Indians amidst scenes of unaffected desolation, which clearly prove that gratitude is not foreign to their make-up.

A still more illustrious patient was Archbishop Taché himself. Owing to age and past labours, the anxieties consequent on the destruction of the Catholic schools and the ravages of a disease of which he would not admit the presence in his system, his life had now come to be a daily martyrdom. Yet, pending the nomination of a coadjutor, his

activities continued incessant and his vitality apparently unimpaired. He could no more travel in a horse carriage; but he would occasionally profit by the conveniences brought to his door by modern progress. He was thus enabled to visit on the line of the C. P. R., the incipient town of Brandon, and bless (May 14, 1893), a modest church edifice for the Catholics of the place.

Then he repaired to Somerset, July 31st, to see the new pastors of St. Léon, the Canons Regular who had succeeded Mr. Bitshe, deceased March 16, 1892.

Early in 1894 he was delighted to receive the visit of his new Superior-General, Rt. Rev. Louis Soullier, accompanied by Very Rev. Father Antoine, Provincial of Canada, whose passage through North America gave rise to a series of festivities, grand receptions in the chief cities and, in the intimacy of the Oblate houses, precious conferences between father and sons. The General arrived at St. Boniface on the 28th of April, and he did not leave the archbishop for the west before the 15th of May. The Oblate prelate had seen and appreciated the new head of his Order: he could now intone his *Nunc dimittis.*

As a matter of fact, it would seem as if he had simply waited for the issue of that visit in order to leave a world which had not always granted him that meed of justice that was due him. Four days after the arrival of Father Soullier, the archbishop

felt so tired and ill that he repaired to the convent to be nursed by the Grey Nuns. Thence he went, on the 8th of June, to attend the anniversary requiem celebrated at the cathedral for his venerable predecessor. He was not to re-enter alive that humble temple which he had himself built thirty-two years before.

A terrible malady, gravel, was slowly but surely leading him to the grave. Yet he would not consent to be treated accordingly until almost unbearable sufferings and the monitions of friends convinced him that an examination by professional men had become necessary. This was made, June 18th, and, as a result, an immediate operation had to be resorted to, which seemed at first successful. But fever supervened, a circumstance which, considering the age and otherwise impaired state of health of the patient, was premonitory of a fatal denouement.

Bishop Grandin happened to be near the sick bed of the venerable patient, as well as Fathers Langevin and Allard, with Mr. Messier and other priests. Taché's quondam auxiliary gave him (June 20th) the holy Viaticum in presence of a numerous clergy, secular and regular. Two days later, after having renewed his profession of faith and recited the formula of his Oblation, the first Archbishop of St. Boniface, the greatest Canadian of the West, left the theatre of his labours for a better world at 6.10 A.M., on June 22, 1894, at the age of almost seventy-one.

His demise was the signal for universal lamenta-

tions. During five days his remains were viewed by an endless procession of sympathizers, in the ranks of which some fifteen thousand Protestants were remarked. The funeral took place on the 27th of the same month, in presence of four bishops, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province, two of his ministers, several judges, and numerous officials. Mgr. Duhamel, Archbishop of Ottawa, delivered an appropriate eulogy in English, and Mgr. Laflèche, who had declined on the plea of ill-health the post occupied by the deceased, extolled in French the character of his life-long friend.

To the encomiums of the eminent Churchmen, the local non-Catholic press joined its powerful voice. Foes and friends alike testified to the great loss the Canadian West had sustained in his disappearance from the scene of his many battles for what he conceived to be right and justice.

"His place can never be filled," declared the *Free Press* in a five-column article. "The life of such a man always comes to its end too soon. Yet those who mourn will say in reference to him: 'Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his' . . . The kindness with which he received strangers could not be exceeded. Even in the midst of controversy his most determined opponents had no occasion to complain of the spirit which he manifested towards them. His convictions were strong, and the ability with which he maintained them was great, but his style of writing was calcu-

lated to allay rather than excite bitterness. . . . It was not his lot to see accomplished all that he desired, but he could feel that he had left nothing undone.''[3]

This last remark refers to the much-debated school question. The *Nor'-wester* (now the *Telegram*) had on the very day of Taché's death, a lengthy editorial with heavy black borders, wherein the great figure of the departed was considered from a different point of view. It said in part:

''As a man of the world, he comes before us more prominently than as a religious, and viewing him in this light, we cannot but express our admiration for the late archbishop. Few men there are possessed of such innate goodness as Monseigneur Taché possessed, and fewer still more honest and upright in their dealings with their fellow-man. To those who knew him, there can be but one estimate of him, which is that he was goodness itself.''

Then, referring to the absorbing topic of Catholic education, the same paper went on to say: ''The adversities of late years were too much for his sensitive nature, and the aged prelate, though ever buoyant in hope, slowly sank down under the betrayal of that trust, which he confidingly reposed in others. . . . When we look back upon that great and good man, we stand astonished, as it were, and we can be no more than silent witnesses to the stainless career, which was his.''[4]

[3] *The Daily Free Press*, 23rd June, 1894.
[4] *The Daily Nor'wester*, 22nd June, 1894.

Even the *Tribune* felt bound to bring its tribute of kindly appreciation to the grave of the great archbishop. "By his death humanity has lost a warm friend and the Church he loved so well, a faithful servant," it said. "In many ways Archbishop Taché will be sorely missed from the community, for he was a personal friend, counselor and guide of scores who had learned to love him. . . . In the presence of all that is mortal of this distinguished prelate, all differences of opinion are put aside, and it is impossible to discern aught but bright portents of a well-rounded life of usefulness and of sacrifice for God's cause. . . . He died on the battlefield, with his sword in his hand, and his armor girt about him."[5]

This last sentence likewise refers to the eminent Churchman's incessant labours, especially those with the pen, on behalf of Christian education. For Taché wielded a pen which was remarkable for purity of diction, unerring logic, and the delicacy with which the inmost sentiments of his mind were expressed. He wrote in French, and it is safe to assert that very few Canadians were his superiors even from the mere standpoint of style.

The writings to which the *Tribune* evidently refers were a defence of the Catholic schools which appeared in the Manitoban press and even in the London *Times*. The latter were afterwards republished in pamphlet form, both in French and English, under the title of "A Page of the History of

[5] *The Daily Tribune*, 22nd June, 1894.

the Schools in Manitoba during Seventy-five Years." It is a little masterpiece of close logic, establishing in 52 double-column pages the right of Catholics to denominational schools by proofs deduced from the most irrefragable sources.

Apart from this and other pamphlets prompted by political conjunctures, Archbishop Taché published two works of wider scope, each of which had at least two editions. Both were originally written for his religious family, and appeared serially in the *Missions des Oblats de Marie Immaculée.* The first was an exquisite little work called *Vingt Années de Missions dans le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique,* which gives a faithful account of the Oblates' labours in Northern America from 1845 to 1865. It was republished in book form at Montreal in 1866. The second, entitled *Esquisse sur le Nord-Ouest de l'Amérique,* after having similarly appeared serially, had moreover the honours of an English translation. We have already reproduced in a preceding chapter an appreciation of that work, in which science by no means detracts from the readableness and delicate aroma proper to the great prelate's writings. It was first issued in 1869, was translated into English the following year, and appeared in a second edition in the course of 1901.[6]

On the morrow of Taché's demise the principal Manitoban paper said that "the work of him who is gone will always remain as an honourable monu-

[6]Montreal. C. O. Beauchemin & Fils.

ment to his memory.'"[7] It is safe to say that his literary works have a lasting value; but he was above all a bishop in God's Church, and it is as such that he must be judged. When he was ordained priest in 1845, he was only the sixth Catholic clergyman within the British possessions from Lake Superior to the Rocky Mountains. At the time of his death, the ecclesiastical province of St. Boniface within the same territory counted no less than 147 priests, under five bishops, and at least 150 nuns instead of the four who had come west the year prior to his own arrival there.

That personnel was distributed as follows in 1894:

For the 21,000 Catholics of the archdiocese of St. Boniface there were 31 secular priests, 36 regular priests (Jesuits and Oblates, without counting 7 monks or Regular Canons), 85 churches and chapels, 35 parishes, 1 college, 1 seminary with 8 students, 14 industrial schools for Indians, 14 convents of Grey Nuns of Montreal, Faithful Companions of Jesus, and Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, 2 hospitals and 1 Trappist monastery.

The diocese of St. Albert counted 28 regular priests (Oblates of Mary Immaculate), 4 secular priests, 9 lay brothers O.M.I., 2 industrial schools, 36 parish or mission schools, 3 orphanages, 4 hospitals, 32 Grey Nuns of Montreal, 5 Grey Nuns of

[7] *The Free Press*, 23rd June, 1894.

Nicolet, 26 Faithful Companions of Jesus, and 5 Sisters of the Assumption.

The Vicariate-Apostolic of Athabasca-Mackenzie, in addition to a coadjutor (Mgr. Clut) to the titulary (Mgr. Grouard), boasted 23 Oblate fathers and Grey Nuns in three establishments. That of Saskatchewan had a more limited personnel, viz., 17 regular priests (Oblates), 1 secular priest just arrived (1894), Rev. Mr. Barbier, 7 lay brothers, and an establishment of Montreal Grey Nuns, with another of Faithful Companions of Jesus. The Catholic population of that new vicariate was 7,000.[8]

These figures give an idea of the wonderful strides the Church had made in the west under the guidance of wise and zealous pastors such as the one she had just lost. These, like all things mundane, come and go; but the Church is immutable and confident in her Divine promise of immortality, in which even local branches share to a certain extent. Therefore the disappearance of Archbishop Taché, regrettable as it was, could scarcely be represented as anything more than an episode in her life.

Rev. Father Allard, O.M.I., who had enjoyed in a particular manner the confidence of the departed prelate, whose vicar-general he had been for many years, temporarily succeeded him as administrator of the diocese. Then his own place at the helm was definitely taken by a worthy pilot, though not before conflicting counsels had rendered the choice of the

[8]See Appendix G.

MOST REV. L. P. A. LANGEVIN, O.M.I.

Archbishop of St. Boniface

same, if not difficult, at least slower than might have been the case had the secular and regular clergy been unanimous on the question.

But it was felt at Rome that the marked preferences of the venerable deceased, who was a good judge of men, could not be disregarded. Consequently, Father Louis Philippe Adélard Langevin, O.M.I., was appointed Archbishop of St. Boniface on January 8, 1895. On the following 19th of March he was solemnly consecrated by Archbishop Fabre, of Montreal, assisted by Mgr. Duhamel and Mgr. Grandin, in presence of a vast concourse of faithful and clergy. Among the latter we must mention the Archbishop of Quebec, the Bishops of Three Rivers, Nicolet, Valleyfield and Ogdensburg (U.S.A.), as well as the coadjutor of St. Hyacinthe and the Abbot of Oka.

The new prelate was the son of François Théophile Langevin, a notary public, and Marie Racicot, whose brother is to-day (1909) auxiliary to the Archbishop of Montreal. He was born at St. Isidore de Laprairie, diocese of Montreal, on August 24, 1855, and made brilliant studies at the Seminary of Montreal. Before his ordination he entered the Institute of the Oblates, wherein he pronounced his final vows on July 25, 1882. Five days later (July 30th), he was raised to the priesthood, after which he occupied various posts in his Order, the last of which, prior to his coming west, was that of director of the Great Seminary of Ottawa.

On the day of his consecration, the new archbishop made such a favourable impression that one of his colleagues in the episcopate could not help remarking: "Not only does he succeed Mgr. Taché, but he really fills his place." It is too soon for the historian to show by a recital of subsequent events how far this observation was warranted. The mellowing influence of time is needed to permit of a faithful delineation of figures and deeds which, at St. Boniface and farther west, are still too near our mental vision to be reproduced with the proper degree of accuracy and impartiality.

PART VI

In British Columbia

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH ON THE PACIFIC COAST.

1774-1842.

Nootka Sound, on the southwestern extremity of Vancouver Island, is the cradle of the Catholic Church on the North Pacific coast and British Columbia. The first representatives of the white race in those remote quarters were Spaniards. As became dutiful subjects of His Catholic Majesty, their very first act in landing at any place was an act of religion. "We named this post *De los Remedios,*" says an old chronicler of a point slightly north of the 57th degree of latitude. "The same day, having prepared ourselves for defence against the Indians, five of us landed about noon, when, having posted ourselves in the safest place we could fix upon, we planted the cross with all proper devotion, cutting another on a rock, and displaying the Spanish colours, according to our instructions on that head."[1]

[1] "Journal of a Voyage in 1775 to explore the Coast of America, Northward of California," by Don Francisco Antonio Maurelle, p. 504 of "Miscellanies," by the Hon. Daines Barrington. London, 1781.

This was in 1775. Three years afterwards the famous Captain Cook visited the southwestern end of Vancouver Island, which the Spaniards had reconnoitred in 1774, and one of the results of his explorations was to noise abroad the richness of the country in furs and fish. As a consequence, the Spanish viceroy, Don Flores, resolved upon the occupation of Nootka Sound, as a means of forestalling any settlement there by the English. An establishment was therefore commenced on its shores in May, 1789, with a governor, by the name of Martinez, at its head.

The old chart which points out the various buildings of that short-lived colony shows no church or chapel; but we are certain from other sources that there was indeed such an edifice, which stood in the centre of the village. Its location is to-day religiously remembered by the Indians who, moreover, still speak of two Franciscan padres whom their ancestors had seen in the midst of the pale-faced strangers.

We know that Father Magin Catala was there in 1793-94, and that he was succeeded by a Father Gomez, who probably stayed with the colonists until they had to make room for the English. Nor was the presence of the missionaries entirely fruitless. When they left Nootka, some twenty natives accompanied them to San Carlos, California, where they were baptized and became permanent settlers.

These facts, which are not generally known, de-

rive confirmation from the traditions even of strange Indians on the same coast. The first bishop of Vancouver Island is authority for the statement that, in 1850, a French sailor who had deserted his ship was redeemed from the Yookltas, among whom he had been held in slavery. This individual averred that an old woman of that tribe had spoken to him of men clad in garments of sombre hue, with their heads shaven, save for a crown of hair, who had, long before, taught her people to pray and sing. She adduced as a last vestige of their teaching the word *alleluia,* which she pronounced quite distinctly.[2]

Moreover, the first Canadian missionaries in the valley of the Lower Columbia found in the hands of Chinook Indians, a tribe which had from time immemorial commercial intercourse with the natives of Nootka, "very old crucifixes," which they claimed were due to the Spanish skippers.[3]

Lastly, when, later on, a permanent mission was established on the western coast of Vancouver Island, its promoter came in contact with natives who had a clear remembrance of a former religious establishment in their midst. "At the time of the Spaniards there were two priests, big stout men, and they were both bald-headed," declared one of them, who added: "My grand-uncle, who told me this, used to come around to Friendly Cove, and the white men would keep Sunday. There was the Sun-

[2] *Rapport sur les Missions du Diocèse de Québec*; Mars, 1835, pp. 112, 113.

[3] *Ibid.*, Juillet, 1847, p. 12.

day-house [or church]—pointing to a spot about the centre of the present village, and they would go on their knees and cross themselves, and at the turn of the winter solstice they had a great Sunday [feast] and they had two babies—is not that what you now call Christmas? Oh! yes, there were priests here, and all the men and women would have to bathe for Saturday and be ready for Sunday, and they learned hymns. I know them yet.'"[4]

Whereupon the old man began to sing some chant in which the words *Mi Dios* (my God) were recognizable. The monastic tonsure gave to the benighted Indians the idea that the priests were bald, and the heavy Franciscan cloaks they wore must have been responsible for the impression that they were big men.

But these early sowings were not destined to have practical results among the aborigines of the Pacific coast. The seed had scarcely time to germinate before it was choked by the cockle of heresy brought there by the ships of the English, who dispossessed the Spaniards of their establishment at Nootka (March 25, 1795), and of their riparian rights elsewhere. It is nevertheless satisfactory to be in a position to assert that the Catholic was the first denomination which had representatives on the coast of Vancouver Island.

So was it with the mainland of what is now British

[4] "'Vancouver Island and its Missions, Reminiscences of Rev. A. J. Brabant,'' p. 2.

Columbia. The first white settlements there were planted in the northern interior of the province, an immense region which was then known as New Caledonia.[5] As early as 1793, six Catholic French Canadians under the celebrated Alexander Mackenzie, of the Northwest Company, discovered the country in a voyage from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific. In 1805-07, were established Forts McLeod, Stuart or St. James, Fraser and George, under the direction and with the active coöperation of Simon Fraser. In the course of the following year, the same trader explored to its mouth in the sea the important stream which now bears his name.

Simon Fraser was a Catholic "with considerable conscience, and in the main holding to honest convictions," according to H. H. Bancroft, a historian with no special predilection for our Church. Catholics were also the French Canadians who became the first residents of the country, and Jules Maurice Quesnel, one of Fraser's lieutenants in his perilous exploration of the torrential river called after him.

Simon Fraser was born at Bennington, in the Province of Vermont, about the year 1776, of a Scotchman who was a captain in Burgoyne's army. After the death of his father, his mother crossed with her family over to Three Rivers rather than live under the dominion of those against whom her husband had fought. Simon was but sixteen when

[5]For interesting details on those foundations and the thrilling experiences of the whites among the northern savages, see "The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia," by the present writer.

he entered the Northwest Company; but his promotion was rapid. He occupied various positions of trust in his corporation; yet all his achievements pale before the stupendous exploration of the Fraser, that "horribly swearing" stream which constantly threatened to engulf his apparently foolhardy party.

As to Jules M. Quesnel, he was a brother to the Hon. Frederic Auguste Quesnel who long shone at the bar and in the parliament of Lower Canada. In 1804 Jules was a trading clerk at Fort des Prairies, or Edmonton, whence he went west in 1807. An important tributary of the Upper Fraser is called after him.

Later on, most of the employees of the fur traders who, till 1830 and after, possessed and governed the country extending between 56° N. latitude to the valley of the Columbia were French Canadians, and therefore Catholics.

From 1834 to practically 1846 one who powerfully contributed to prepare the way for the evangelization of the country was the Indian wife of Peter Skene Ogden, a Hudson's Bay Company *bourgeois* famous in the history of the fur trade on the Pacific. She had been baptized in her native country, and never tired of communicating her religious knowledge to the aborigines who repaired to Fort St. James, on Stuart Lake; so that the native tribes, which were then not only numerous but populous, soon heard of God and his ministers, the "Black

Gowns,'' through the whites who, in a majority of cases, intermarried with them.

The fruits of such unions were a generation of half-caste children, who became especially numerous in the valley of the Wallamette, a tributary of the Columbia, where several whites who had been voyageurs for the Pacific Fur Company, of John Jacob Astor, and then employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, had congregated to till the soil. They soon formed an important settlement which, added to that of Fort Vancouver, the principal post of the fur traders on the Pacific, was in dire need of the ministrations of religion when, on November 24, 1838, two devoted priests arrived at the latter place from far-off Quebec.

These were Revs. Norbert F. Blanchet and Modeste Demers, whose passage at St. Boniface we have already chronicled. Mr. Demers was to become the Apostle of British Columbia, and to this day his memory is held in veneration by many aboriginal tribes, who remember him as the priest who first took the Glad Tidings to their forefathers.

Born on October 12, 1809, at St. Nicolas, Lower Canada, Modeste Demers was ordained on February 7, 1836, after which he served fourteen months as assistant to the parish priest of Trois Pistoles. On April 27, 1837, he embarked at Lachine for the extreme west and, in company with Mr. Blanchet, his superior, he reached the eastern limits of what is now British Columbia on the 10th of the following

October. Four days afterwards, he offered up the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Big Bend, on the Upper Columbia. This was the very first time that this supreme act of worship was enacted on the mainland of the Pacific province.

The two missionaries established their headquarters on the lower course of that majestic stream, at Fort Vancouver, where they stayed until October, 1839. They then received permission from the traders to start a permanent missionary station near Fort Wallamette. But, burning with zeal for the spiritual welfare of the poor and lowly, Mr. Demers soon found himself again to the north of the present international boundary.

On the Lower Fraser and adjoining territory, were populous villages of Indians belonging to the great Salish family, to which the young apostle resolved to carry the word of God, in spite of the forebodings of those to whom he had so far ministered. These forebodings were based mostly on the state of continual hostility towards one another in which the various tribes lived, and, worse than all, on the persistent rumours that the dreaded Yookltas of the north intended shortly to make one of their periodical irruptions on their hereditary foes of the Fraser valley. The Yookltas were a powerful tribe, the terror of the southerners, which subsisted on the fruits of its raids and inhuman butcheries.

Nothing daunted by these distressing reports, Mr. Demers repaired to Fort Langley, a short distance

from the sea coast, which he reached by the end of August, 1841. There he found, under Mr. James M. Yale, a Protestant gentleman who treated him with consideration, eight French Canadians, one Iroquois and several Kanaks, all living with native women. He regularized their position in the eyes of the Church, and then turned his attention towards the Indians.

He was agreeably surprised to see that most of them knew how to make the sign of the cross and could sing some few simple hymns. This preliminary instruction they derived from their commerce with tribes already evangelized by Demers. In the crowd of three thousand aborigines to whom he preached the word of God, he remarked a Yooklta chief, tall and gaunt, and differing from all others by his high and broad forehead, his long locks and his general air of distinction. The northern potentate confessed to the humble minister of Christ that he had been a bad man, but assured him that he would carry to his people the wonderful message from heaven which he had been privileged to hear. From common reports his spontaneous confession was but the expression of truth, since it had been the wont of the strange chief to behead his prisoners and drink their blood.

On September 3, 1841, Demers baptized 99 children, and on the three following days no less than 263. As yet unfamiliar with the Christian ideas concerning the pardon of offences, most of the Indians

at first came to the instructions armed *cap-a-pié;* but they were soon induced to deposit their guns at the feet of the missionary, and afterwards to leave them at home entirely. Innumerable murders and other crimes had previously been committed by the heterogeneous crowd attracted by the young Canadian's preaching, and in the beginning many a "bad heart" was itching for revenge. Yet it is worthy of remark that not even the slightest altercation took place as long as the representative of the Prince of Peace was there.

Only one act of cruelty had he to deplore, which, to the Indians themselves, seemed the most natural occurrence in the world. It furnished the missionary with an occasion to give them a practical illustration of Christian ethics and exact full reparation from the guilty party. In common with all warlike aborigines, the coast Indians had numerous slaves, over whom they were supposed to enjoy an undoubted right of life or death. A member of Demers' new flock one day sank his dagger deep into the flesh of a slave with whom he was momentarily displeased. The priest blamed him in no measured terms for this act of inhumanity, and left him to his thoughts. As a result of that reprimand, the proud redskin, weeping for shame, confessed his crime publicly, and begged forgiveness at the feet of the missionary.

By the 7th of September, no fewer than 758 children had been regenerated in the waters of baptism, when Demers returned to his home by the Walla-

RT. REV. M. DEMERS
First Bishop of Vancouver Island

mette, after an absence of forty-four days, only part of which had been spent in the vicinity of Fort Langley.

Meanwhile Father De Smet, S.J., was announcing the Gospel to the Kootenay and Okanagan Indians, immediately to the west of the Rocky Mountains. As early as 1840 we find him among the former; but those aborigines lived both north and south of the boundary line, and it is not quite clear that he then crossed into the British possessions. In May, 1842, that celebrated missionary went from Colville to Fort Vancouver, in order to confer with the two Canadian priests as to the best means of extending their field of action.

Some seven or eight hundred miles north of the Columbia, beyond endless forests of conifers and snow-clad mountains, over an immense region dotted with numberless lakes, lay the primitive villages, or groups of tents, of representatives of the great Déné race, which has everywhere shown itself easily amenable to religious discipline. Four tribes, the Chilcotins, the Carriers, the Babines and the Sékanais, had heard, directly or indirectly, of the "man of God" and his wonderful message, and were clamouring for the favour of a visit from him.

On the other hand, the whites among them—all traders or the servants of traders—were no less desirous of obtaining that blessing. With that end in view, as well as to aid the incipient mission of Oregon, as the Lower Columbia valley was then

called, the superintendent of the northern posts, Mr. Peter S. Ogden, sent (November 15, 1841), the following circular to the personnel under him:

"Messrs. Blanchett and Demers, the Catholic missionaries on the Columbia, requested me, prior to taking my departure from Vancouver last summer, to ask the inland servants of the district to contribute towards their mission, and I have to request that you will make application accordingly."

We do not consider it inexpedient to give herewith the results of Ogden's appeal to the northerners of New Caledonia. The following are the names of the contributors whose offerings are recorded:[6]

	£	s.	d.
William McBean	3	0	0
Louis Gagnon	2	0	0
Jean-Baptiste Boucher (c)	2	0	0
Jean-Baptiste Boucher (d)	1	0	0
P. Gun	1	0	0
W. F. Lane	2	0	0
Pierre Letendre	2	0	0
William Morwick	1	0	0
P. S. Ogden	2	0	0
William Thew	1	10	0
Jos. Brunette	0	10	0
Jean Couturier	1	0	0
Paul Fraser	2	0	0
O. La Ferté	2	0	0
J. Tubault (Thibault?)	1	0	0
Pierre Roy	1	0	0[7]

With a view to repaying the kindness of their distant benefactors, and at the same time in order to extend the reign of the Gospel among the numer-

[6]Four other persons had not apparently had time to hand in their donations when the paper which contains those recorded above was taken to headquarters, Stuart Lake.

[7]"History of the Northern Interior of B. C.," pp. 227, 228 of third edition.

ous wards of the New Caledonia traders, it was decided that Mr. Demers should join the brigade of horses and boats that yearly took up the supplies of the northern posts. In furtherance of that plan, that gentleman left on June 29, 1842, in company with Mr. Ogden and a number of French Canadian servants. The missionary has left us an account of his journey through the wilds of the British Columbia interior, part of which will bear reproduction.

"Such caravans," he wrote, "are composed of large crowds of men and horses, the latter packing the baggage and merchandise destined to the different posts of the north. That assemblage of men, horses, and baggage unhappily renders progress slow and irksome. It is nine or ten in the morning before everything can be made ready for a start. One must seek out and gather the animals set loose and scattered in all directions the previous night. After long hours of waiting, the band is finally brought in, and the neighing of the horses, the yells of the *engagés,* the oaths forced on them by impatience, the contestations of the inferiors and the orders of the leaders result in a confused uproar not always flattering to scrupulous ears.

"At length, after having partaken on the grass of a meal of dried salmon, they load the horses, and at ten o'clock we are off. Progress is exceedingly slow, and full of more or less disagreeable incidents. We must face a fiery atmosphere, an enervating sun, a suffocating dust, with sometimes a hill to climb and a ravine to cross. The first days especially a person

feels a general uneasiness, augmented by various inconveniences arising from the uncomfortable position he has to submit to while riding a horse already loaded with his chapel, his bedding, his household goods, and even his cooking implements. Fortunate is he if an untoward wind does not compel him to swallow waves of a thick dust, which prevents him from seeing two rods ahead. A dull and monotonous sound of conversing voices is constantly humming in your ears, which only the crossing of a creek or a river can interrupt. Then people draw nearer one another, the horses hesitate, the drivers shout and get angry; there are pushings, falls, and tumblings, with wrecks, which excite general merriment, and furnish a theme for conversation and laughter during the rest of the day.

"There is no halt until camping time, and the day's work is over by three or four in the afternoon. Then everything is prepared for the night, the animals are unloaded and sent out to feed, the outfit is set in order, small groups of men insensibly form themselves in anticipation of the forthcoming rest, the inevitable meal of dried salmon is taken, and the sun has disappeared below the horizon."[8]

Five days' march brought the party to Okanagan Forks, where Mr. Demers was welcomed by the natives who had, the previous spring, received the visit of Father De Smet. After baptizing twenty-eight children, he proceeded with the traders' pack-train

[8]To the Bishop of Quebec, 20th Dec., 1842.

as far as Kamloops, where no minister of the Gospel had so far penetrated. Received as the special envoy of the Almighty, he had none the less to tear himself from his newly-acquired children, and, always in the wake of the fur traders, he reached Fort Alexander, on the middle Fraser, by the 24th of August. On his way north, he had regenerated 85 children in the waters of baptism.

Fort Alexander was the terminus of the land route, where horses were exchanged for a flotilla of boats plying on the Fraser, the Nechaco and the Stuart rivers. He found its inhabitants a prey to that corruption which usually follows the indiscriminate commingling of the whites and reds. "They know of no moral restraint," he writes. "Among them the sacred laws of marriage are more loosely considered than in any other nation of North America. Promiscuity seems to enjoy an uncontested right; suicide, murder, and a thousand other disorders follow, as natural consequences, this contempt for the laws of the family."

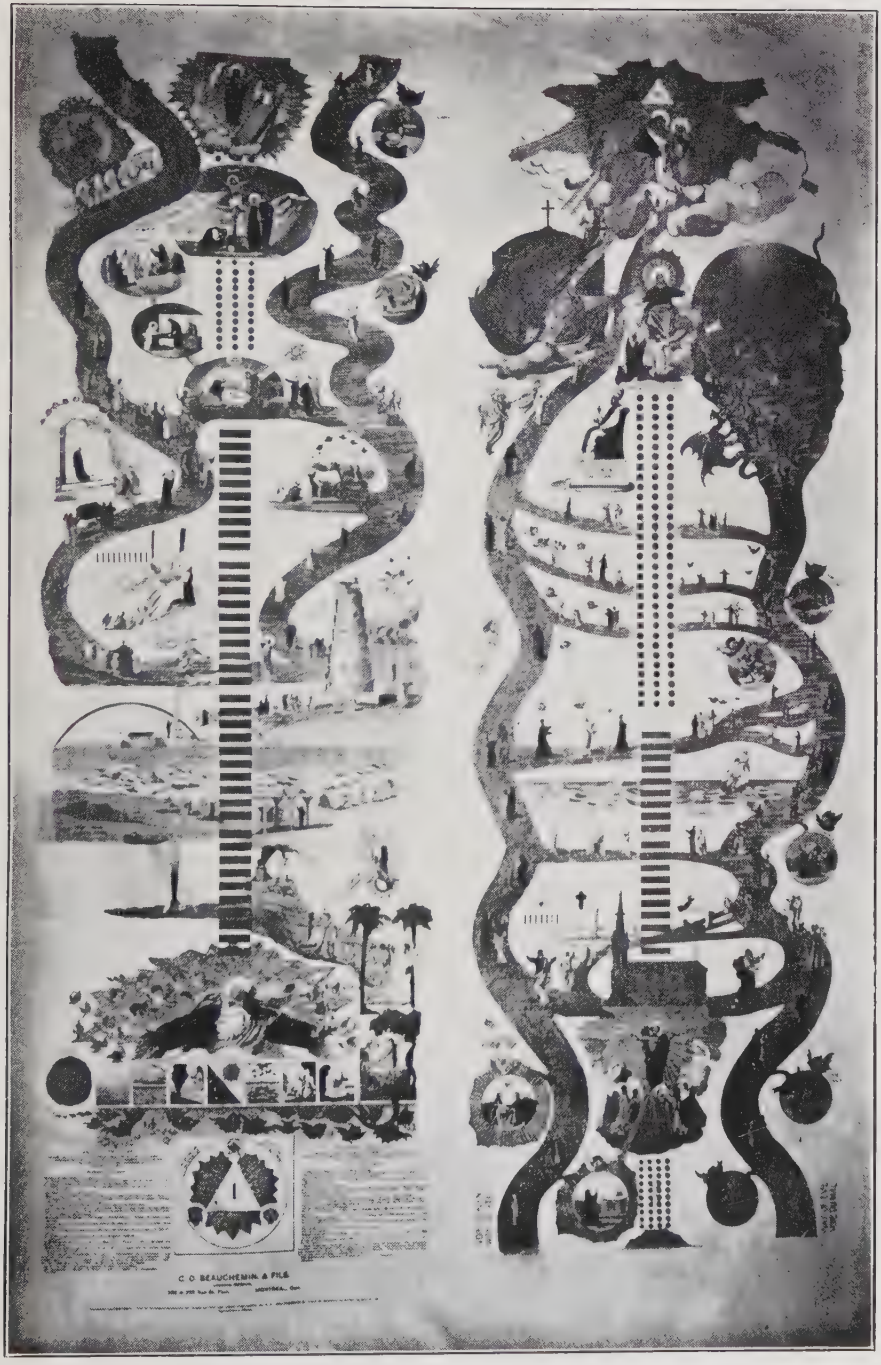
The missionary goes even so far as to say that "it is not to be wondered at if they outdo even animals by the infamy of their conduct."

After having recalled the sacred laws that were so openly violated, and administered 66 baptisms, mostly of children, Demers proceeded up to Lake Stuart, which he reached on the 16th of September. Fort St. James, on that beautiful sheet of water, was the emporium of the north, west of the Rocky Moun-

tains, and the capital of New Caledonia. Yet his stay there was unavoidably limited to three days, every moment of which was consecrated to the instruction of the adults and the christening of the children. In the former task he was, as usual, aided by Mr. Blanchet's "Catholic Ladder," with which our readers have already made some acquaintance.[9] He went even so far, in spite of the shortness of his sojourn at the "capital," as to teach the natives a few simple hymns he had composed at Fort Alexander.

Returning to this locality, he built there a rude church, and went down to William's Lake, where he gave the Shushwaps a sixteen days' mission. This

[9]A Protestant author, who resided in British Columbia long before it was annexed to Canada, Mr. Matthew Macfie, has the following notice of it in his work, "Vancouver Island and British Columbia" (London, 1865): "It consists of a long slip of paper, on which the principal events narrated in Scripture, from the creation of the world to the founding of the Christian Church, are illustrated. The progressive development of the Church of Rome from that time up to the present is also portrayed. The advantage of the arrangement is that a large amount of religious information is contained in remarkably small compass. The Hebrew version reads from right to left, but this 'Self-interpreting Bible' reads from bottom upwards. At the foot of the page the globe appears emerging out of chaos, and immediately above stand a male and female figure with a tree between them, representing our first parents partaking of the forbidden fruit. The other details of this invention may be readily guessed at, till we reach the Protestant Reformation, up to which point the line of instruction is intelligible and straight. Thence another line diverges at right angles from the main one, leading off the page into the abyss. This is marked *chemin du Protestantisme*. Then the straight path of the Church continues to *Pio Nono*, and onwards still to heaven" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 475, 476). Father Lacombe's "Catholic Ladder," of which we present to the reader a greatly reduced reproduction, is now in universal use in the missions of the Canadian West, from Lake Superior to the Pacific. The right half of it is a continuation of the left side, to which it is usually added by means of pasting, so as to make it a continuous "ladder," of which the prototype was evidently that first prepared by Mr. Blanchet.



FATHER LACOMBE'S "CATHOLIC LADDER"

(Much Reduced)

was followed with great eagerness, and one day, as he came late to the catechism, he had to pass over the shoulders of his people without once touching the ground in repairing to his seat, so compact was the crowd that had gathered to hear him.

There also the natives put up a modest chapel, with pieces of parchment for window panes. In January, 1843, a Siberian cold held that region in its grip when, to the intense discomfiture of flock and pastor, the parchment was eaten up by the dogs, so that snares had to be set at night for the capture of the delinquents.

On February 21, 1843, Demers left his beloved children to return home. He reached his permanent residence in the Columbia on April 13th, after a most trying journey.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

BISHOP DEMERS AND THE OBLATES.

1842-1861.

As the Rev. Mr. Demers was leaving the scene of his labours throughout the mainland of British Columbia, Rev. Jean-Baptiste Bolduc, a new recruit from Canada, was accompanying Chief Factor James Douglas when that gentleman left, with twenty-two men, to erect at the southern end of Vancouver Island a fort which, under the name of Victoria, was destined to become the political capital of the whole country. Leaving on March 13, 1843, he reached his destination on the following day. A large concourse of Indians greeted him, and on the 19th of the same month, he celebrated the holy mysteries in presence of the Hudson's Bay Company employees and a congregation of 1,200 Indians, among whom he baptized 102 children.[1] This was

[1]H. H. Bancroft gives in this connection a dialogue of his own invention between priest and native chief, after which he would have it that "Bolduc baptized until arrested by sheer exhaustion" ("History of British Columbia," p. 98. San Francisco, 1890). By the context it is evident that the flippant historian thereby refers to baptisms of adults, unprepared adults, and not of children, an insinuation which is as groundless as his plain statement that Bolduc was a Jesuit. That missionary was a secular priest, born 30th Nov., 1818, at St. Joachim, County of Montmorency, Que., and ordained 22nd Aug., 1841, after having studied at Quebec. He left for Oregon on the 1st of September of the same year, and stayed there until 1846. After having filled various posts in the ecclesiastical metropolis of Quebec, he died there, 8th May, 1889, honoured with the title of domestic prelate in the Court of Leo XIII.

the first mass said on Vancouver Island since the evacuation of Nootka Sound by the Spaniards.

With a view to meeting the requirements of such a vast field, Father De Smet had made his way to Europe, whence he returned, August 4, 1844, with four priests and some nuns. Among the former was Father John Nobili, S.J., who was commissioned to visit the northern posts of New Caledonia already evangelized by Mr. Demers.

Accordingly, the Jesuit father left, accompanied by a young novice lay brother, in June, 1845, for Stuart Lake and way-points. He stayed five days at Fort St. James, after which he had to leave by boats that went to Fort Alexander for a supply of grain. He returned north the following year, and reached Fort George, at the confluence of the Nechaco with the Fraser, by December 12, 1846. There he found, in addition to the local Indians, fifty Sékanais who had come from the Rocky Mountains to see him, and had waited nineteen days for his coming.

On the 24th, he was at Stuart Lake, where he spent eleven days not only preaching against the vices common to all humanity, but inveighing especially against the national customs of burning the dead and enslaving the widows. The great lodge consecrated to sorcery and jugglery was converted into a church, and because the good father encountered no active resistance to his designs, he went

away with the consoling impression that he had abolished all he had spoken against.[2]

From Stuart Lake he proceeded to Fort Kilmars, on Babine Lake, which he was the first missionary to see. Returning to Fort St. James, he could not at first obtain the ear of his people, handicapped as he was by a natural timidity and a series of festivities among the natives. But, early in January, 1847, he made up for the lost time by keeping the Indians busy hearing instructions and learning catechism until the beginning of Lent, when he turned his steps to the south.

During the same campaign,[3] he visited the Chilcotins, a rather troublesome Déné tribe, the southernmost of the family within British Columbia. Those Indians had never seen a priest when he reached their first village, October 24th (probably 1847). After having blessed some sort of cemetery for the same band, he repaired to two others of their meeting-places, which were offered a similar opportunity of profiting by his ministrations. Kindly and as yet little familiar with the ways of the aborigines, Father Nobili baptized among the Chilcotins a num-

[2] "I had the happiness of abolishing the custom of burning the dead, and that of inflicting torments upon the bodies of the surviving wives or husbands. They solemnly renounced all their juggling and idolatries" (in "Western Missions and Missionaries," by Fr. De Smet, p. 514).

[3] The year is very hard to ascertain. Nobili's Memoirs seem to put it as 1856, an evident mistake, perhaps for 1846. But this last cannot be any more correct, since from baptism certificates we have seen in his own handwriting, it is certain that he was on Babine Lake, about 500 miles away, on the 25th of October, 1846.

ber of adults whom he would undoubtedly have left longer under probation had he possessed more experience of their natural fickleness.[4]

While Nobili was thus evangelizing the natives of New Caledonia, his confrère De Smet was visiting the Kootenays of Tobacco Plains, whom he found in thirty lodges (August, 1845). Hunger had forced many families to cross the Rockies in quest of buffalo.

There again we are face to face with the proselytizing propensities of the early French in America. A Canadian, named Edouard Berland, had been for some time in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company when Father De Smet met him.[5] The missionary was delighted to realize that the Indians had kept up the good resolutions taken some five years before. Since his last visit to them they had, he wrote, "followed to the letter all they remembered of [his] recommendations"; and why? because "Mr. Berland had exerted his zeal to maintain [them] and their brethren in the good dispositions in which [he] had the consolation of finding them. . . . They habitually assembled for morning and evening prayers, continued the practice of singing

[4]Father J. Nobili was born in Rome on the 8th of April, 1812. The son of a lawyer, he was educated at the Roman College, and entered the Society of Jesus in the capacity of a novice on the 14th of November, 1828. But it was not till 1843 that he was ordained priest. Towards the end of that year he sailed for Oregon with Father De Smet. In 1849 his superiors ordered him to California, and at the end of February, 1856, we find him as superior of Santa Clara College, where he died, being buried on the 3rd of the following month.

[5]For an interesting circumstance of Berland's life among the western traders, see our *Dictionnaire historique*, art. Berland, Edouard.

canticles in French and Flathead, and faithfully observed the Sabbath precept.''[6]

De Smet was the first minister of religion to penetrate among the British Kootenays. He improved his opportunity by baptizing 105 persons among them, of whom 20 were adults. Then followed the erection, with proper solemnity, of a large cross, destined to remind the people of the obligations they had contracted. He left them for the country of the Blackfeet on August 30, 1845.

Reverting to the Rev. Mr. Mod. Demers, a most important event, which was to have far-reaching consequences, had just taken him from the ranks of the common clergy to place him on a throne, humble and modest though this was. Owing to the distance of the Oregon missions from all ecclesiastical centres, his superior, Rev. N. F. Blanchet, who had reached the Pacific with the title and powers of a vicar-general, had been raised to the episcopate, and almost immediately after been promoted to the rank of an archbishop, with the title of Oregon City, a See created for the circumstance. In spite of his protestations,[7] Mr. Demers was given him as a suffragan, being appointed Bishop of Vancouver Island,

[6]Letter dated Upper Ford of the Flatbow [Kootenay] River, 2nd Sept., 1845.

[7]''I do not know what tears I should use to express my misfortune,'' he wrote from St. Paul, Oregon, to Vicar-General Cazeau, under date 22nd Sept., 1847. . . . ''How wretched I am! What shall I do? I wish not to accept, and at the same time I do not feel I have the courage to do what I said I would do in my last letter. I cannot bring myself to the idea of leaving the archbishop in the critical circumstances in which he is.''

with future residence in the nascent city of Victoria. On November 30, 1847, he was consecrated at Oregon City by his new metropolitan. He then passed into Canada and, after some time spent in waiting for the end of the revolution of 1848, he proceeded as far as Europe, with the object of getting the means of organizing a diocese in a region which was as yet but a howling wilderness, his only diocesans being badly demoralized savages, with a few whites of various nationalities, too often the scum of their own countries, grouped in a single attempt at a settlement.

REV. MR. DEMERS' SIGNATURE.

Seldom, if ever, has any local Church been founded under more distressing circumstances. When Bishop Demers went first to Victoria, in his new capacity, he had not as much as one priest at his disposal. When he returned thither in 1851 after his voyage to Europe, he discovered that one had been there whom he cordially wished had never left his native country. In his inexperience and for the lack of some one to counsel him, that priest had baptized over four thousand Indians, and married as many of them as must receive the Church's blessing on their union, after only eight days of instruction and probation. The result of that lamentable haste was

that the natives were then in an infinitely sadder plight than before they had seen a minister of religion. They knew that they had received "God's water," and now felt secure. Many had taken back their plural wives and returned to their superstitious practices.

Now, as the good bishop expressed it in a letter of October 26, 1852, "those Indians are so brutish, so coarse and so sensual that we must first make men out of them, before we think of converting them into Christians." That ill-advised missionary had lived nine months in the midst of the Cowichan tribe, but had taken his departure therefrom prior to the bishop coming to take possession of his See.

This he did on September 5, 1851. That ceremony had few parallels in the history of the episcopate. "Why were you not there," he wrote afterwards to one of his friends, "to witness a spectacle which would have been so novel to you! You would have marvelled, and perhaps been edified, at contemplating the Bishop of Vancouver Island kneeling on the trunk of an old tree which the waves had rolled ashore, and taking possession of that heathen land which the successor of Peter has entrusted to him! That ceremony could not take place in my cathedral, and you guess why: the lumber which is to serve in its construction is still growing in the forest."[8]

The new prelate had then for his entire clergy three priests and a subdeacon. By the end of 1853

[8]Victoria, 2nd Nov., 1852.

he had as yet neither home, nor even a modest chapel to use as a cathedral. On the other hand, the Hudson's Bay Company, on which he had counted, refused him aid of any kind.[9]

Yet even greater trials were in store for him. Another of his priests, a native of Belgium, proved unfaithful to his clerical vows and unworthy of his high calling, thereby giving scandal which did infinite harm to the Indians and the cosmopolitan throng which then formed the town of Victoria. He had to be sent back to his monastery in Gand, and Demers was left to weep over the ruins accumulated by him who should have furnished his share in the edification of God's Church.

However, even then a ray of light pierced the gloom which encircled the disconsolate pastor by the Pacific. On September 5, 1847, four Oblate fathers, accompanied by two brothers, had arrived at Walla Walla, within what is now the State of Washington, and had ever since laboured among the various tribes of that territory and what we now call Oregon. Demers valued them highly as Indian missionaries. He had therefore asked for some of them of their Founder and Superior-General. "Ever since I have been here I have not ceased to beg for some, and I am told from Marseilles that there are

[9] "Against my expectations, the Company refuses me all help; no more any passages on the vessels or with the caravans going to the interior of the country, as formerly; no more any support from the Fort [Victoria] . . . the land sells at one pound per acre." From a letter by Bishop Demers; Victoria, 26th Oct., 1852.

elsewhere more pressing needs,'' he writes to the Archbishop of Quebec, adding immediately: ''However, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate have accepted my mission;[10] I shall shift on them the burden of the same, and it is in that sense that I am going to write to Propaganda. The so well-disposed tribes of New Caledonia clamour for missionaries; the Bishop of Marseilles knows it: it is enough for me.''[11]

The Bishop of Vancouver had to wait some time before he could see the realization of his plans concerning the advent in his diocese of Oblate missionaries. In the meantime he worked as best he could, aided by a few Canadian priests, to promote the spiritual welfare of the natives and others. He was indeed well qualified to instruct his clergy as to the line of conduct they should follow in their relations with the aborigines. In spite of his innate meekness, his tact and consequent influence were such that the wildest tribes learned to regard him with feelings of awe. He had already made the acquaintance of the terrible Yookltas, the Vikings of the North Pacific, dreaded by all the coast tribes, especially those of the Lower Fraser, as their worst enemies. He baptized the son of their chief, and it is on record that, like another Rollo, the savage potentate, seeing in the missionary a being partaking more or less of the supernatural, did not dare approach him except on bended knees, and trembling all over his body.

[10]That is, ''the Indian missions to be established within my diocese.''

[11]To Mgr. Turgeon, Archbishop of Quebec; Victoria, 26th Oct., 1852.

The mysterious power which Demers wielded was, however, eventually the source of trouble and embarrassment to its possessor. For example, one of the chiefs that frequented Fort Langley got it into his head to hear confessions, thinking that he would by this means share the consideration which this ministry ensured to the missionary. "Since the priest does it, there can be no wrong in imitating him," reasoned the child of the forest.

To this epoch must be referred an incident which is a good illustration of the civilizing power of the Catholic religion over the most uncouth natures. Mr. Matthew Macfie has the following in his book on "Vancouver Island and British Columbia":

"In regard to the sign of the cross, to which so much importance is attached in the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church, the bishop of that faith in the diocese of Vancouver Island related to me a touching incident. When the Right Reverend Father first administered Christian ordinances to the Indians at the mouth of the Fraser, they were at variance with the Nanaimo tribe. 'The man of prayer,' as they termed the bishop, had occasion, about the time referred to, to visit the latter place in his episcopal tour after leaving the Fraser. Those from whom he had recently parted felt so edified by his counsels that they determined, at all hazards, to attempt following him. From some cause, however, they missed him; and as their canoes approached Nanaimo, to their dismay they beheld their foes ranged on the beach, prepared to fire upon them.

"For some time they kept at a safe distance, and held a council among themselves. The conclusion arrived at by them was as interesting as it was pacific. They argued that if the enemy was faithful to the instructions of 'the man of prayer' they would understand the sign of the cross, return it, and allow them to land in peace. They accordingly stood up and crossed themselves, at which signal the muskets of the Nanaimo men were laid aside, and a cordial welcome extended by them to their Christian brethren.

"It was stated to me, on trustworthy authority, that in consequence of Bishop Hills, of the English Church, when travelling in British Columbia, forbidding the Indians this mode of salutation, he was subjected to some disappointment and mortification. During one of his visits to that colony they mistook him for a Roman Catholic priest—the only description of missionary they had known up to that period—and adopted the sign of Christian freemasonry which has been alluded to. Mothers brought their infants to be baptized by him. But on discovering the Protestant bishop's opposition to their accustomed religious forms, they declined to receive the virtue of his episcopal manipulations, and withdrew from him as a dangerous heretic!"[12]

The episcopal tour referred to by Macfie took place in the spring of 1855. Its itinerary was along the eastern coast of Vancouver Island. Bishop Demers

[12] *Op. cit.*, pp. 474, 475.

then immensely impressed his primitive flock with his "long hat" and his "crooked staff," as they called his mitre and crozier. His exhortations were fruitful of good, and even the unruly Yookltas consented to bury the hatchet in order to join their hereditary foes in the exercises of our holy religion. He did indeed experience some difficulty on the question of monogamy; but he usually prevailed against the dictates of the corrupt nature of his flock, especially the chiefs, some of whom objected that "abundance had departed from their homes with the outgoing of their plural wives."[13]

At last, it became possible for the Oblates to undertake an establishment in the diocese of Vancouver Island. Their first station was at Esquimalt, a fine harbour near Victoria, where a house and a modest church were built in 1857-58.[14] The new post then became the official residence of Rev. L. J. D'Herbomez, the vicar of the Oblate missions on the Pacific. Thence he directed the establishments already existing in what was then called Oregon, as well as those which were afterwards founded on the island and mainland of British Columbia.

But it was felt that but little good could be accomplished among the natives who were in contact with the whites, as the lawless conduct of the latter was a constant stumbling-block to the aborigines. The

[13]Bishop Demers; Victoria, 21st Jan., 1856.

[14]It is said that from 1849 to the beginning of 1852, one of them, hailing from Olympia, resided chiefly at Fort Victoria (Begg, "History of British Columbia," p. 478. Toronto, 1894).

newly discovered gold mines on the mainland brought to the doors of the bishop a wave of humanity which, for that and other reasons, claimed his attention. Unable to exercise an appreciable influence on the older newcomers, Mgr. Demers directed his efforts to the youth among them. In 1858 he went again to Canada, whence he returned, June 5, 1859, with four Sisters of St. Ann, an Institute then lately founded in the province of Quebec. These were Sisters Mary of the Sacred Heart (in the world Salomé Valois), Mary Angéle (Angéle Gauthier), M. Luména (Virginie Brasseur), and M. of the Conception (Mary Lane).

These courageous ladies immediately established at Victoria a school for the daughters of the whites, a measure which the bishop had rendered more easy of execution by previously securing six city lots, on which he likewise built his house and a cathedral.

With the prelate came also from Canada a kindly priest who was to pass over forty years in the land of his adoption, chiefly as chaplain to the nuns, and pastor of Quamichan, an Indian village to which was in time added the care of the Catholic whites settled in the neighbourhood. This was the Rev. Pierre Rondeau, a native of Berthier, in Lower Canada, where he was born July 19, 1824. He had been ordained at Montreal on August 30, 1857.

As to the Oblates, they watched at Esquimalt over the spiritual interests of the Irish sailors, who were fairly numerous on the British vessels that

called at that port. Then they turned their attention to the natives of the island. The first of their missionaries to visit and endeavour to reform them was Rev. Casimir Chirouse, one of the four Oblate priests who had reached Oregon in 1847.[15] In a preliminary visit made in May, 1859, Father Chirouse baptized about four hundred children and induced over two thousand adults publicly to renounce gambling, conjuring and murdering. So successful was his preaching and so sincere were the Indians in their promises, that they loaded his canoe with the paraphernalia of the medicine-man, or conjurer, as well as with knives, gambling discs and similar accessories to sin.

The disastrous results of haste and undue indulgence had been but too glaring in former years, and the Oblates of the Pacific coast were averse to admitting into the Church Indians that would not break from all the practices which, directly or indirectly, recalled the dominion of Satan over them.

Though he had as yet but two secular priests in his diocese, the Bishop of Vancouver Island was constantly thinking of the far-off Indians of the mainland, so many of whom he had himself visited during the first years of his apostolate. So did Father D'Herbomez, the superior of the Oblates. Therefore, the latter sent inland Father Charles M. Pandosy to pave the way for the founding of an

[15]These pioneers were Fathers Ricard, Chirouse, Pandosy and Blanchet—the latter still unordained—with Bro. Janin.

establishment beyond the Hope Mountains. With the same end in view, Father Pierre Richard, accompanied by Bro. Surel, repaired to Fort Hope, on the Fraser, in August, 1859, and, having procured horses for their supplies and outfit at Kamloops, crossed the mountains and joined Father Pandosy. Thus was founded, October 8, 1859, the mission of the Immaculate Conception, on the eastern shore of Lake Okanagan.

To fill the vacancies caused on Vancouver Island by this foundation, there arrived on December 12th of the same year, two young Oblate priests from France, Revs. Pierre P. Durieu and Léon Fouquet, who were to prove perhaps the two most efficient Oblate missionaries to the Indians of the Pacific. Father Fouquet made his first campaign in the company of Father Chirouse, leaving Victoria on the Wednesday after Easter, 1860, for a trip of over three months' duration among the natives of the island. Their departure produced something of a sensation among the whites of the capital, as the Indians they proposed to visit were noted for their barbarity.

But new fields were calling for other labourers. In the southeastern corner of the province, the Jesuits stationed in what is now the State of Washington were evangelizing the Kootenay Indians, with what results may be gathered from the following: "Mr. Brazeau assured me that these Indians were now really good Christians, truthful,

brave and moral, and so honest that if they find even the smallest thing, such as a pocket knife or a piece of tobacco, they will bring it to the camp of the probable loser and cry it up and down till he is discovered."

This is from Lord Southesk's work on "Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains."[16] The noble author then adds: "Mr. Brazeau considers that, to the west of the mountains, the Roman Catholics have wrought a great work of reformation among the natives."

The mainland, of which the importance had been revealed by the rich gold deposits of the northern interior, had just been constituted a distinct colony, with New Westminster as its capital. The vicar of the Oblate missions withdrew his subjects from the diocese of Nesqually, whose Ordinary[17] wanted to enforce on them views incompatible with their calling. Father Fouquet was then sent to establish in the city in formation near the Fraser delta what has developed into the most important house of St. Charles (September 13, 1860).

Among the evangelical workers whom the abandonment of the Nesqually missions rendered available were Fathers Jayol and Grandidier, the latter a new recruit, the former an Oblate who had made his novitiate in the Oregon missions, after having

[16]P. 154.

[17]Mgr. A. Magloire Blanchet, a brother to the archbishop of the same name. The diocese of Nesqually is now that of Seattle.

served some time there as secular priest.[18] Father Jayol was stationed among the Sanich Indians, on Vancouver Island, and, in the beginning of December, 1860, Bro. Blanchet who, owing to a hunting accident,[19] had now renounced the idea of being raised to the priesthood, went to help him erect some sort of shelter, pending the building of a more substantial residence, should the necessity for a permanent mission become evident.

Writing of the natives already evangelized by the present bishop of the diocese, Father D'Herbomez remarks in his correspondence that, in spite of the fact that ten years had elapsed since Mr. Demers' passage among them, "in order to remember that auspicious date, they had adopted the plan of marking ever day and week by making a knot daily or weekly on a string, which was then some one hundred yards long."[20]

As Indian missions were long paramount, and have remained quite important, in the Pacific province, it may not be amiss to introduce the reader to the ceremonial followed, from the beginning, in connection with the reception of the missionary by the various native villages.

[18]He had left France with Archbishop Blanchet and quite a numerous apostolic band on Feb. 22nd, 1847, and reached the mouth of the Columbia in a sailing ship on Aug. 13th of the same year. He was ordained priest on the fourth Sunday of the following September.

[19]While hunting ducks for the sustenance of the fathers and others, he accidentally shot off one of his fingers, and, in his humility, he considered himself thereby debarred from the service of the altars until his superiors convinced him that he must be ordained.

[20]To Bishop de Mazenod; St. Joseph of Esquimalt, 15th Feb., 1861.

In the eyes of the aborigines, the priest was above all the "man of God," a being quite apart in creation, upon whom too much honour could scarcely be lavished. As soon as his canoe, manned by a crew hailing from the last village visited, was in sight, a volley of musketry saluted the temperance flag which floated to the wind over the frail skiff. Then the men on shore separated from the women and, forming lines distinct from theirs in front of the village, received a hearty handshake from the missionary, after each person had blessed himself with a generously proportioned sign of the cross. As he passed along, the priest had to be very careful lest he should forget even the smallest babe in the distribution of his fatherly attentions.

Then the chief welcomed the envoy from Heaven in the name of his people, and the missionary reciprocated by telling the villagers of his happiness in meeting his children, and delicately hinted at the great expectations he entertained with regard to their docility to the voice of God, whose instrument he was to be among them.

Sadly did the poor Indians stand in need of religious ministrations, especially after their first contact with the unscrupulous whites, as a rule single men of the coarsest description, who abounded in their midst in the early sixties. One of the pioneer priests thus describes the condition of the natives when he first met them:

"An immorality which would have put to blush

Sodom and Gomorrha, pagan Rome and Turkish Constantinople had spread among them the most horrible corruption. The unfortunates had learned to add to their coarse vices the foul habits which accompany the scum of a degraded civilization. In spite of the laws of the country, conscienceless men revelled in an infamous traffic of poisons which they called liquors: alcohol with a mixture of camphor and tobacco juice. At that time drunk Indians were to be seen everywhere. From my experience of five or six months, I do not think that out of a thousand a hundred could be found who were not used to drink to excess. Many there were who were never sober. One might have seen them in groups around, or even among, the whites, fighting and killing one another, while they howled like wild beasts. In one night two were killed in New Westminster. On the preceding Sunday I had separated and dispersed them; on that day we were absent. In their camps, where nothing could be apprehended from the whites, it was still more horrible. The sight was not unusual of relatives and even brothers fighting and killing one another. Nay, drunken fathers have been known to stab their own inoffensive children.''[21]

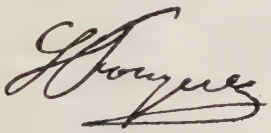
This was indeed but little encouraging. Nevertheless the missionaries set to work with a will, combatting with all their might the twin vices of debauchery and intemperance. And not without suc-

[21]Father Fouquet to Father Tempier; New Westminster, 8th June, 1863.

FATHER FOUQUET, O.M.I.

cess; for, as early as May 22, 1861, Father Charles Grandidier was writing: "Governor Douglas did me the honour of a visit a few days ago. He told me that the Indians have never been so sober, and that he was very pleased with the change."[22]

This was written from Fort Hope, on the Fraser. That the results of the priests' efforts were not ephemeral is proved by the fact that two years afterwards the *British Columbian,* a New Westminster paper, had the following in the course of a corre-



FATHER FOUQUET'S SIGNATURE.

spondence from Yale, only a few miles above Fort Hope: "And here may be observed the happy fruits of the labours of the Romish missionaries, not only in the cleanliness and comfort observable [among the Indians], but in the marked abstinence from drink and other disorderly conduct."[23]

Moreover, immoral unions between whites and Indian women were discountenanced, and it began to be said that "the squaws are all leaving the white men, and there is the greatest excitement."[24]

Still more typical of the transformation wrought among the Indians by the handful of French priests

[22] *Missions des Oblats de Marie Immaculée,* vol. III., p. 205.
[23] June 3rd, 1863.
[24] Fouquet to Tempier, June 8th, 1863.

in the province is a letter which appeared in the *British Colonist,* a newspaper published in Victoria. The writer alludes, in the opening sentences, to the Anglican bishop, whose diocese had an endowment of £25,000:

"After so much has been said by a distinguished ecclesiastic calculated to mislead the enlightened public of Great Britain as to the influence of the Catholic religion upon our aboriginal population, I am compelled, however reluctantly, to make a plain statement of facts.

"I reside in the above district [Cowichan] in the midst of about 2,000 Indians who, eighteen months ago, carried on a system of drunkenness and murder too horrible to relate. At this date they may be said to be a reclaimed people. Drink is forbidden by them, and a penalty attached to drunkenness by order of their chiefs. Consequently, other crimes are of rare occurrence. And to what is all this owing? To the honest and persevering labours of a poor Catholic priest who receives no salary, and is fed by the Indians as far as their means will enable them. Within eighteen months he has baptized upwards of 250 children and 50 adults who can repeat the catechism in their own language. Besides cutting timber, they have subscribed their dollars to build a substantial church, capable of containing 400 people, and it is, every Sabbath, full to overflowing. I have seen hundreds standing in the rain to catch a sound of the priest's exhortation. They are

now collecting funds to furnish their church and make it like the white man's place of worship. I have seen over 900 clean-washed, well-dressed Indians at mass in one of their own lodges."

Then the correspondent adds, not without a touch of irony:

"Though trained in the English national Church myself, may I ask the Lord Bishop, where in all civilized England with its grand cathedrals and fat, rosy-cheeked, spiritual peers and clergy; where in British Columbia or Vancouver Island blessed with large episcopal endowments; where in the *civilized* world, can you find 900 out of 2,000 souls so moral and attentive to their religious duties as these so-called heathens? In these respects, Mr. Editor, I wish we had many more such heathens. I think, seriously, when my funds increase, of sending a detachment of them as missionaries to the 200,000 thieves of religious England. There are friends in Saanich prepared to give facts equally striking and delightful in regard to the mighty change wrought by Catholics in that region."[25]

[25] *The British Colonist*, March 26th, 1861.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE FIRST BISHOP OF THE MAINLAND.

1861-1867.

These were indeed glorious results. But it would scarcely be possible to give an idea of the extraordinary zeal, of the dogged perseverance and unending vigilance which alone could secure them. The superiors of the Oblate missionaries on the Pacific themselves more than once gave expression to the opinion that their herculean labours there seemed beyond human endurance.

The year 1861 was an exceptionally important one in their annals. In the course of the same the Oblates built two chapels at Esquimalt, a house for the priest at Sanich, three churches in other Indian villages, two chapels at New Westminster, one for the natives, the other for the whites, among whom were counted many of the soldiers then in garrison in the incipient town, as well as a presbytery and a hospital in the same locality. At Fort Hope they erected a chapel and a house for the missionary, while on Lake Okanagan they were busy putting up the various buildings that go to make a well-organized mission.

Upwards of twelve thousand Indians were visited and catechized during the same year, while appre-

ciably good results followed the missionary's ministry among the whites. Thus in a village which counted but sixty Catholics of that race, nine who had practically forgotten the Church of their first communion were reconciled with their Creator and became practical Christians. Among the Indians eighteen hundred men out of two thousand took the pledge in a single mission, and over sixteen hundred faithfully kept it.

These victories, bloodless though they were, cost infinite pains and a constant watchfulness on the part of the priests, against whom the worst passions of unprincipled whites were also leagued. The saloon keepers soon complained of what they called the undue interference of foreigners with their licensed trade. At Fort Hope Father Grandidier was even publicly insulted, and almost assaulted, by them. As the good priest declined to prosecute his aggressors, the well-thinking among the whites felt all the more indignant at the outrage. Nay, His Excellency the Governor, accompanied by Chief Justice Begbie and Judge P. O'Reilly, called on him to personally congratulate him on the results of his campaign on behalf of temperance and civilization.

Father Grandidier had made in the same year (1861) a long and fatiguing journey throughout the very interior of British Columbia in the interests of the souls of whites and reds alike, going as far north as the far-famed Caribou mines. Leaving Fort Hope on July 3rd, he proceeded by way of Fort Douglas

and Lillooet. At the former place, which had previously received Father Durieu with enthusiasm, Grandidier was grieved to feel the blasting effects of heresy. Protestant ministers had shortly before passed there, and as a result the natives now manifested a degree of distrust and even hostility which prevented him from baptizing some of the infants.

Nevertheless he preached, exhorted and taught as best he could under the circumstances, a programme which he religiously followed in all the localities he afterwards visited. Let us hasten to add that the interference of the preachers at Douglas and Lillooet ultimately proved futile. There is not a single Protestant Indian in those quarters.

So far the journey had been on foot, and the wayfarer had to pack his impedimenta under the rays of a Senegalian sun. Farther north he got a horse which took him as far as Keithley Creek, Antler Creek and Williams Creek, the principal centres in the gold-bearing region. There he endeavoured to do as much good as possible under the circumstances to the souls of the miners, an undertaking fraught with innumerable difficulties. As usual, the Irish showed by their proverbial generosity their appreciation of his services.

On his way back, he approached the Alexandria Indians, who were delighted to see a priest after an interim of some fourteen years. But they loudly manifested their disappointment and openly gave vent to feelings of discouragement when they were

told that the missionary could not permanently remain among them.

As to his superior, Father D'Herbomez, he had been convoked to the Oblate Chapter that was to elect a successor to the Founder of his Institute. He therefore crossed the ocean in the summer of 1861, leaving young Father Fouquet in charge of his missions on the Pacific.

The pro-vicar understood, in common with his older brothers in the country, that no results, however satisfactory, would warrant the missionaries relaxing their exertions in the apostolic field. He knew well, and experience was amply to demonstrate, that the very first fruits of priestly zeal must be taken at a discount when it is a question of American Indians, because much of their first fervour is usually attributable to enthusiasm consequent on novelty. The labourers in the Lord's vineyard must therefore multiply themselves, and add to their original stations if the flame of the first fire is to be kept burning.

This they did by establishing, always in the course of 1861, some thirty-five miles about New Westminster, St. Mary's Mission, which was to become the great centre of missionary activities among the natives of the Lower Fraser valley, upon whom it was forever to leave the impress of its influence through the industrial school which was soon (1863) to shine as its chief ornament.

To fill up the gaps caused by this foundation in

the personnel of the Oblates, the vicar of missions returned from Europe in 1862 with three excellent religious: Fathers Baudre, Le Jacq and Gendre. The two last named, especially Father Le Jacq, were to become great luminaries among the natives of British Columbia. Father Gendre, the kind and jovial friend of the Indian, was not, alas! destined to a long career as a missionary; but the few years that Providence was to grant him were spent in unbounded devotion to the interests of his charge.

The first post he filled previous to consecrating himself to the education of the native youth at St. Mary's Mission, was that of New Westminster. Temporarily alone there, he shortly afterwards thus described his position:

"How queer were to me those few days passed in my hermitage! I formed a perfect community, remarkable for its orderly conduct. When I was cooking, kneading my dough, or baking it on the sheet-iron of my little stove, the entire community assisted at the operations. The point of the Rule which I observed the best, after brotherly love, was the prescription of silence. Always strict silence, except when, annoyed by the racket made by the rats, I launched after them some French anathema which the native rodents did not understand."[1]

While these precious recruits were giving the first-fruits of their zeal to the Indians of the mainland, a no less valuable addition accrued to the island

[1]Letter dated Feb. 16th, 1863.

clergy in the person of a French priest, the Rev. Joseph Marie Mandart, a native of Vannes, Brittany, who arrived at Victoria in the spring of 1862. That young ecclesiastic was to prove one of the most persevering of the secular priests within what is now British Columbia. In fact, he devoted his entire life to the service of the natives, and the cradle of his missionary career was, long afterwards, to become his last resting place. He was, in course of time, the first priest to visit Alaska from the coast after the transfer of that territory to the United States (1867).

Meantime, as if these apostolic men had been idle in the midst of their neophytes, the ranks of the white population were being swollen by numerous arrivals of people fevered with the passion for gold. In 1862 eight or ten thousand strangers made their way to British Columbia, who generally gave but few consolations to the ministers of the Gospel, in spite of the fact that the latter did not hesitate to follow them out to the wilderness of the northern mountains. We have already mentioned Grandidier's arduous trip of 1861; Bishop Demers repaired himself to Caribou in the course of 1863.

This invasion of the white race was decidedly detrimental to the welfare of the natives. Apart from the deleterious influences it exercised on their morals, it brought from California the scourge of smallpox, which rapidly spread among them and as speedily thinned their ranks. The havoc

played by the dread disease could scarcely be imagined by such as are not familiar with the absolute disregard of the Indians for the most elementary hygienic precautions in cases of sickness.[2]

The missionaries had then to turn surgeons and physicians. Father Pandosy vaccinated several thousand Indians; Father Fouquet rendered the same service to at least eight thousand, while Fathers Chirouse and Durieu similarly operated on about as many between themselves.

The calamity which rendered this measure necessary did not prevent the opening, in 1863, of a new mission in the vicinity of Fort Rupert, on a small island near the northwest coast of Vancouver Island. To the new post St. Michael was given for patron. Let us say once for all that the Indians for whose benefit it was intended never appreciated to any extent the blessing that was at their door. Grossly immoral, jealously conservative of their heathenish rites and traditions, and devoid of any religious aspirations, except such as manifest themselves by the rattling of the medicine-man, the Kwakwiutl, in spite of the superhuman efforts of Fathers Fouquet, Durieu and Le Jacq—incontestably the best missionaries on the Pacific—repaid their benefactors by deriding them and their ministry, or at least by showing the greatest indifference towards the ob-

[2]When the writer reached Victoria in July, 1880, he was assured by the priests that, but a few years before, the ground of the surrounding woods was still white with the blanched bones of the victims of smallpox.

ject of their mission, until, after years of patient toil, the worthy priests had to leave them to their fate.

In the southern extremity of the same island diocese more consoling events were taking place, though the labours of bishop and priests in Victoria itself scarcely met with all the success they deserved. The Sisters of St. Ann were doing wonders with their convent school, which in 1863 counted already about one hundred pupils of all denominations.

Mgr. Demers had also started a school for boys in his episcopal city. This was soon handed over to the Oblates, who converted it into a college, calling it St. Louis College in honour of their superior, Rev. Louis D'Herbomez. For this a brick building 45 by 30, two stories high, was erected, whose cornerstone was blessed August 25, 1863. The staff of the new institution was composed of Father Baudre, president; with the scholastic Bro. McGuckin and the lay Bros. Allen and McStay, as professors.

Rev. James M. McGuckin was ordained soon after (November 1, 1863), and, owing to his nationality and consequent familiarity with English, he immediately became a most useful subject.

Slightly over two weeks later another precious recruit was arriving (November 19, 1863) at Victoria. This was a young priest, delicate in health but strong in mind, the Rev. Charles Joseph Seghers, who came from Gand, where he was born on December 26, 1839. From the start he impressed favorably the Bishop of Vancouver Island, who

almost immediately entrusted him with the administration of the finances of his diocese.

But an event of much greater importance, a measure which was to be the turning point in the history of the Pacific coast missions, the division of Bishop Demers' diocese, was soon to become an accomplished fact. Before we part with this pioneer epoch let us briefly survey the state of the Church in British Columbia at the close of 1863.

We see the saintly Bishop Demers at Victoria, struggling with one or two secular priests against the religious apathy, if not hostility, of the whites among his diocesans, while a few Oblates are in charge of St. Louis College. Sanich and Cowichan are other posts whence the spiritual needs of the local and surrounding Indians are attended to. A few miles from Victoria (as that town then stood) is Esquimalt, the headquarters of the Oblate vicar, where at least one confrère and a brother of the same Order usually keep him company, when they do not minister to the Catholic sailors and others near by. At the opposite end of the same island is St. Michael's Mission, while on the mainland we find the promising missionary stations of St. Charles, at New Westminster; St. Mary's, further up the Fraser, and the Immaculate Conception, on Lake Okanagan.

The Oblates of these various posts, the true pioneers and first successful missionaries to the Indians of the Pacific, are: Fathers D'Herbomez, vicar of

missions; Chirouse, Pandosy, Richard, Durieu, Fouquet, Grandidier, Jayol, Le Jacq, Gendre, Baudre and McGuckin. They are aided with regard to material concerns by Bros. Janin, Surel, Vernet, Allen and McStay. A few other priests were at the two establishments within Mgr. F. N. Blanchet's archdiocese still in the hands of the Oblates.

The Indians whose spiritual interests were the object of the solicitude of most of these missionaries, belonged to many tribes, all of which may be reduced to six stocks or primary families. Their numbers are to-day greatly diminished; yet all of these divisions are still extant as so many ethnic entities. The six aboriginal stocks are, from north to south: the Déné, the Tsimpsian, the Haida, the Kwakwiutl, the Salish and the Kootenay. With the exception of the latter, each of these groups is subdivided into several tribes, with as many dialects which differ from one another, though they are clearly related in terminology or structure. Their manners and customs are distinct, and at times their ethnic characteristics and physiological peculiarities are almost the opposite of those of other congenerous divisions.

The British Columbia Kootenays are settled within the valleys of the Upper Columbia and of the river called after them. They number barely 590, and are remarkable for their manliness, stolidity and pure morals.

The Salish stock is numerically the most import-

ant of the province, its territory bordering on that of the Kootenays, and extending from 52° 30′ latitude to the American boundary and beyond. It also includes the littoral of Dean Inlet, on the mainland, and most of the eastern half of Vancouver Island. Within the provincial limits, this family is divided into seven tribes, each of which boasts a more or less great number of villages with large communal houses inhabited by several related families. The best known are the Shushwaps, located along part of both Thompson rivers and the Fraser from 51° to 52° 30′; the Stalos, on the Lower Fraser, from Yale to the sea, and the Sishalhs (or Sechelts), some fifty miles north on the coast. The British Columbia Salish are at least 11,000 at the present day.

Within the same province the Dénés are divided into five tribes, prominent among which are the Carriers evangelized by Mr. Demers. They form an aggregate of some 2,500 souls.

Immediately to the west thereof are the Tsimpsians (about 5,000) who, in common with the Kwakwiutl of the mainland and island coasts (perhaps 1,900) and the Haidas of Queen Charlotte Islands (2,600) are essentially maritime aborigines. They dwell on the Skeena and the Nass, as well as on the intervening mainland coast. Most of the representatives of these north Pacific families are steeped in immorality, and therefore look askance at the restraints on the passions imposed by the Catholic Church.

We must repeat that the above are the figures for the present population. Especially as regards the maritime tribes, which were formerly very populous, they do not begin to represent the real numbers of the British Columbia Indians at the time of which we write.

We have already seen Protestant witnesses testifying to the remarkable transformation wrought among the aborigines of the southern half of the province. Before we proceed with our narrative, it will not be amiss to add to those precious testimonies the discreet note of a fair-minded minister, who became author after a sojourn of a few years on the Pacific. We read in Macfie's work already referred to:

"Arriving at Cowitchin one summer evening, about eight o'clock, in a canoe, after a long day's paddling, I heard the sound of chanting from the native church, which was erected and supplied with altar furniture chiefly, if not entirely, at the expense of the Indians. It was a log structure, about 50 by 20 feet, and on a high situation. At some distance from it, in front, a huge wooden Latin cross stood in the ground, that sacred emblem being usually found in connection with Catholic mission stations. On entering the church I observed a *frère* engaged in teaching some Indian lads hymns used in devotional exercises, which they sang with taste and vigour. On retiring they were careful to sign themselves with the cross. I visited the priest, who lived

in a humble shanty adjoining the church, and I could not fail to be struck at the exemplary self-forgetfulness he manifested in his arduous work. He had lived there for some years before white men settled in the locality; and notwithstanding the utter absence of comforts, and even scantiness of necessaries that marked his lot, he seemed cheerful and contented. There was no disposition shown by him to put a brighter face on the results of his efforts than facts would justify. Indeed, for whatever favourable report I received, I was indebted to disinterested witnesses of his labours. I learned that on Sundays hundreds of natives attended religious services; that monogamy was generally enforced by him with success, and that in many other respects the morals of the people were correct. One case was told me of illicit whisky-dealers, who, attempting to land alcohol from their sloops, were driven off and their casks rolled into the sea. I fear we should look in vain for a display of similar zeal for the cause of morality and temperance in a white community of the same extent.''[3]

Despite the success of the Catholic priests among the majority of the natives, numerous Protestant preachers of all sects were then waging a relentless war of opposition to their designs. We are forced to say that they too often made up for their failures by circulating unfounded assertions concerning the standing of the ''foreign priests'' and the fate that

[3] ''Vancouver Island and British Columbia,'' pp. 473, 474.

was in store for their followers. It so happened, however, that, in May, 1864, Governor Sir James Douglas resolved to have a great celebration to commemorate the Queen's Birthday. Wishing to secure therefor as large a concourse of Indians as possible, he applied to their religious leaders, the despised French missionaries. As a consequence, Father Fouquet went down from St. Mary's Mission to New Westminster with a flotilla of six or seven hundred canoes, carrying some 3,500 natives, with sixty temperance flags—a red cross on a white field bordered in red, and the words, "Religion, Temperance, Civilization" in large golden letters. In front of the governor's residence a formal meeting of the tribes took place in presence of the whites of the town, who had not expected to witness such a vast and orderly assembly.

After a series of discourses, the representative of the Sovereign distributed gifts to all the chiefs, who were presented to him by their missionaries. Out of fifty-eight only one, with a dozen followers, belonged to the Protestant ministers. So that not only were the results of Catholic zeal thereby made patent to all, but the insidious talk of the priests' opponents was publicly refuted by the treatment granted to the Catholic Indians.

Every subsequent year this anniversary was made the occasion of similar festivities and consequent triumphs for the Catholic faith, practically till the time of the admission of the province (then a colony) into the Canadian Confederation.

But we must now come to the great event of 1864. The field entrusted to the care of Bishop Demers was evidently too large for any one man to cultivate. What was then called British Columbia, in contradistinction to Vancouver Island (which formed a separate colony), was therefore constituted into a vicariate-apostolic, with Father Louis Joseph D'Herbomez as first pastor.

This missionary, though of rather delicate health, had already shown his exceptional abilities in the government of men. Born at Brillon, in the diocese of Cambrai, France, on January 17, 1822, he was ordained on October 14, 1849, by Bishop de Mazenod, the Founder of the Oblate Institute. He came to the Oregon missions as early as 1850, by way of Cape Horn, and since the return to Europe of the superior of the Oblates on the Pacific, Father Ricard, he had represented there the General of his Order.

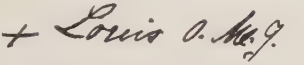
Preconised Bishop of Miletopolis on December 20, 1863, he could not be consecrated until the 9th of October of the following year. Archbishop Blanchet, of Oregon City, was the consecrating prelate, being assisted by Bishop Demers and Father Fouquet who, by special dispensation, acted as third bishop.

It was a great day for Victoria, where the ceremony took place, a day which had a sort of duplicate on October 16, 1864, when Bishop D'Herbomez took possession of his See at New Westminster.

RT. REV. L. J. D'HERBOMEZ, O.M.I.

First Vicar-Apostolic of the Mainland of B.C.

Father Fouquet had repeated that year the long journey to the Caribou mines and way-points already made by Father Grandidier and Bishop Demers. Leaving New Westminster June 11th, he visited in succession, but without very tangible results from a spiritual standpoint, the various mining camps; after which he directed his steps towards the land of the Chilcotin Indians who happened to be away in their mountain fastnesses.



BISHOP D'HERBOMEZ'S SIGNATURE.

Then, in conjunction with his brother priests, he continued to add the functions of surgeon to those of doctor of the soul. It is calculated that, in December, 1864, the Oblate missionaries must have vaccinated some fifteen or sixteen thousand Indians. Furthermore, as if to prove the variety of their gifts and the universality of their cares, one of them, Father Fouquet, published in the course of 1865 a pamphlet wherein he vindicated the rights of the Catholics to a Christian education.

Catholic charity manifested itself by two foundations in 1864 and 1865. On October 16th of the former year an orphan asylum was established at Cowichan by the Sisters of St. Ann, and on June 20th of the latter the same religious commenced work on a hospital at New Westminster.

When the winter of 1864-65 was over, Bishop

D'Herbomez undertook a series of journeys, the better to come in touch with his new flock and ascertain their needs. At the same time, Father Durieu was repairing to the uninviting mission of Fort Rupert, whose Indians were "very far from heaven," as Fouquet put it, and Father Gendre was proceeding to the Caribou district, in order to allow once more the gold miners an opportunity of fulfilling their religious duties.

In 1866, Bishop D'Herbomez, who had already visited the posts of the Lower Fraser, directed his steps towards Douglas and Lillooet, then Kamloops and Okanagan, where a number of French, German and English settlers profited by his ministrations. Meanwhile, Father Grandidier was again extending the same privilege to the miners of the Caribou gold fields.

In the autumn of 1865, there arrived from Ireland a young priest, Father Edward Horris, who, though not endowed with any specially brilliant qualities of the mind, was nevertheless destined to make his mark among the whites of the Lower Fraser, by his affability and devotion to duty. New Westminster was to be his headquarters, and he commenced his career there by teaching, with Bro. Allen, in St. Louis College, a newly established counterpart of the institution of the same name in Victoria.

Then, as the mainland was growing in importance, new plans for its evangelization were made, which involved a more numerous personnel. The

vicar-apostolic was therefore in the necessity of recalling the Oblates that still remained on Vancouver Island, with a view to concentrating their energies in the vast field specially entrusted to their zeal, viz.: all of the present province of British Columbia, without Vancouver Island. This comprised, in addition to the territory west of the Rocky Mountains, a large strip of land to the northeast of the same, now better known as the Peace River country, as well as the important group of the Queen Charlotte Islands.

By this measure, which was executed in the course of 1866, Bishop Demers' diocese was left entirely in the hands of secular priests.

These were never numerous; but those who remained long at their posts were so much the more deserving as no other ties than their zeal for the salvation of souls bound them to their uninviting ministry. We have already seen Rev. Mr. Rondeau early at Quamichan. At the time we have reached in our narrative (1867) Rev. J. J. Jonckau, a young Belgian priest, offered his services to the Bishop of Vancouver Island. To the time of his death, which occurred in 1888, he laboured faithfully in the field of the Pacific missions. Two years afterwards there came (October 19, 1869), another priest of the same nationality, the Rev. August Joseph Brabant, who was to do yeoman's service, mostly on the west coast of the island, as we shall presently see.

Meantime Rev. Ch. Seghers would sally out of

Victoria to minister to the natives of Nanaimo, Chemainus and other places on the Island. But his strength soon failed him. He became seriously ill, and was so debilitated by frequent and copious vomiting of blood that he had eventually to return to Europe at a time (October, 1869) when Bishop Demers, called to the Council of the Vatican, had planned to entrust him with the administration of his diocese.

CHAPTER XL.

EXTENSION IN THE NORTH OF THE MAINLAND.

1868-1875.

As these worthy missionaries vied with each other in their exertions on behalf of the natives and whites of Vancouver Island, the new pastor of the mainland was on the eve of undertaking a most important journey to the same end. The aborigines of New Caledonia, already brought to the knowledge of God by the visits of Demers and Nobili, had, for the lack of labourers, been left to themselves since 1847. Exactly twenty years after that date, one of their principal chiefs had come down to Quesnel, a trading village at the confluence of the river of the same name with the Fraser. Meeting there Father McGuckin, who had just founded (May, 1867), a new mission for the Shushwaps and whites at William's Lake, whence he also ministered to the spiritual needs of the Caribou miners, the Carrier chief had asked for a priest. In answer to that request, which was duly transmitted to Bishop D'Herbomez, His Lordship had promised to go north himself.

Accordingly, he set out on April 18, 1868, with Father Le Jacq, who was destined for the mission of William's Lake. This was to be a five-month journey.

At Fort Alexander, or Alexandria as the place was now more commonly known, the prelate took with him a young but intelligent Indian, to act as his interpreter throughout the district he was to visit. Arrived at Stony Creek, his party was received with enthusiasm, and the bishop's teaching did as much good as was possible after the demoralization wrought out by the miners that were flocking to the Omineca gold fields.

He soon had an example of the sordid ideas which commerce with the whites had engendered among the natives. At the close of the mission, he was asked $10.00 for the loan of a canoe that was to take him up to Stuart Lake, the chief centre of their country. Mgr. D'Herbomez felt, or appeared, indignant.

"What!" he exclaimed, "I have travelled over five hundred miles to come and do you good, and you would treat me as you do the whites who come here simply to get gold! If I had to pay you for any service, I should be ashamed of you, and would not recognize you as my children."

The reprimand had the desired effect. Let us say here that one of the secrets of the Oblate fathers' success in the Pacific province has been their insistence on being treated as the representatives of God, who, while engaged in missionary work, must be served without any other remuneration than the satisfaction derived from the thought of helping in the salvation of souls. The Indian who does some-

thing for the sake of his religion takes an interest in that religion, and yields respect and obedience to its minister proportionately to the amount of generosity he manifests in the furthering of the same. He has, therefore, been sedulously taught to convey free of charge the missionary from his place to the next to be visited and to support him, when engaged on apostolic work in his village, as far as his meagre resources will allow.

After a retreat preached at Fraser Lake, Bishop D'Herbomez returned to Stony Creek, whence he proceeded to Stuart Lake. Arrived there on the Monday after Pentecost, he gave an eight days' mission, during which incalculable good was done. Then he made for Babine Lake, where he was received with more curiosity than real eagerness for spiritual benefit. The Indians had just commenced a series of festivities, accompanied by dancing and gambling, the perils of which he strove to impress on his hearers.

On his way back, the prelate passed through the Caribou gold mines, where his presence elicited unstinted praise in the local paper. He was treated with great generosity by the Irish and the French he met. He then went down, leaving the main road to repair to Okanagan mission, and repeated there his efforts on behalf of the spiritual welfare of his flock.

One of the results of that pastoral visitation was the settling of Father McGuckin at Richfield, Cari-

bou, whence he periodically visited the other mining centres.

We may also mention that, during the last part of the same, Mgr. D'Herbomez had had for a companion Very Rev. Father Charles Jolivet,[1] sent from Paris as special visitor to the missions of the Pacific. Jolivet first joined the prelate at William's Lake Mission, as the latter was returning from the north. Arrived at New Westminster, the visitor then preached a general retreat to a number of Oblate priests, after which he went to inspect St. Michael's Mission, near Fort Rupert, and satisfy himself of the accuracy of the unfavourable reports he had heard concerning that post.

Another result of the bishop's apostolic journey was the blessing of churches, in Caribou for the whites, at Clinton for whites and Indians, and at Quesnel, Alexandria, Soda Creek, Tlitenaiten and Pavillon, for the natives. The last of these churches was the fifty-fifth edifice he had opened to public worship within the four years that he had been entrusted with the care of the mainland.

This was indeed progress. William's Lake Mission was then (1868) in the charge of Father McGuckin; St. Mary's was governed by Father Durieu; the Immaculate Conception, or Lake Okanagan, was presided over by Father Pandosy; New Westminster had Father Horris for a parish priest, and

[1] Afterwards Vicar-Apostolic of Natal, South Africa.

Father Fouquet was vainly battling against the indifference of the Kwakwiutl at St. Michael's.

On his return to New Westminster, Mgr. D'Herbomez was delighted to welcome, November 24, 1868, two new recruits for his missions in the persons of Fathers Marchal and Lamure. The latter was not destined to a long career on the banks of the Fraser. He had barely been two years there when, on December 17, 1870, he was carried away by a most unexpected accident. He was then stationed at St. Mary's Mission, a locality famous among the early missionaries for the poverty and discomfort its inmates had to endure. Under those circumstances, hunting partook more of the nature of unavoidable drudgery than of sport or recreation. Father Lamure was so engaged in the company of a lay brother who followed him through the bush, when a twig let off the cock of the latter's gun, whose contents lodged in the body of the hapless priest. He died a few hours later.

Leaving the blood-stained banks of the lower Fraser, we see, in the course of 1869, Father Le Jacq following in his bishop's footsteps, and wending his way north from William's Lake, where he was now stationed. He was welcomed by the Carriers; but the Babines made at first a visitation of measles the pretext for discontent, inasmuch as they attributed it to the machinations of the "French sorcerers," as their neighbours of Tsimpsian parentage called the missionaries. But the kindness and

persuasive powers of the good father soon explained away the difficulty.

At Fallen Rock (or *Rocher Déboulé*), on the Bulkley, he witnessed one of the great fairs annually held there. Hundreds, if not thousands, of dusky traders from the coast coming to a tribe which had so far proved rebellious to the voice of grace, had arrived to exchange the products of the white skippers and their own for the furs, dressed skins and other articles of the interior Indians.

These gatherings of alien hordes untamed by the influence of religion were at times fraught with danger for the peace of the tribes and the safety of individuals. Father Le Jacq was not long without having a practical illustration of this.

One day, his host asked him whether everyone was not bound to pay his debts.

"Certainly," answered the unsuspecting missionary.

Whereupon the Indian made for an Atna (or stranger of Tsimpsian parentage).

"You owe me so many blankets," he said to him; "therefore, on the advice of the priest, I take this as a payment of the same."

And the Babine went off with the coveted goods he had forcibly snatched away from the Atna.

Furious at this interference, the stranger swore that he would be revenged on the white man, and it looked for a time as if the missionary's days were indeed numbered. For a time his life was in

danger; yet he managed to stay four weeks among those Indians, despite the fact that they were in too close contact with the Atnas to give him all the consolations to which other Dénés had accustomed him.

The following year (1870) it was Father McGuckin's turn. Ascending the Upper Fraser in a small canoe, he visited Fort George and Stuart Lake, reaching the latter place on June 3rd. Then he made for the haunts of the nomadic Sékanais, whom he found as good and moral Indians as they were ignorant of the white man's ways. Their congeners of Bear Lake likewise received the benefit of his visit, and, though tired out and even ailing, the missionary thence made for the Skeena River, across snow-capped mountains, where his diet consisted of marmot and dried salmon.

As these apostolic peregrinations were absorbing the time of choice missionaries in the north, important events were shaping themselves in the south. Bishops Demers and D'Herbomez had gone to Rome in order to attend the Vatican Council. The former could scarcely return therefrom. Broken down by his apostolic labours and the cares of his responsible position more than by the weight of years, he expired in his episcopal city on July 21, 1871.

A zealous missionary and a prelate meek and humble of heart, he was regretted alike by his flock, who had not always fully understood him, and by the Protestants, who had not spared their efforts to

thwart his plans. Without being a professional littérateur, Mgr. Demers was possessed of no mean literary attainments. He had compiled in the course of 1838 and 1839 a vocabulary of the Chinook jargon, a medley speech made up of badly pronounced French, English and various native words, with terms from the real Chinook language for a background. This curious mixture was then, and remained to our day, the almost universal means of communication between whites and Indians, as well as between heterogeneous tribes on the Pacific, practically from California to Alaska.

On the death of the first Bishop of Vancouver Island, Rev. Charles Seghers, who had returned with him from Europe, became the administrator of the diocese. The young priest was himself scarcely expected to live, though, as if through the direct intervention of Heaven, he soon after rallied, becoming physically as strong as he had been weak.

The Dénés of the northern Interior of British Columbia were again visited in 1872. While Father McGuckin was directing his steps towards the bunch-grass covered plateaus and valleys of the Chilcotin Indians, to the west of William's Lake Mission, Father Le Jacq was again repairing to the beautiful lakes and rivers by the banks of which lived the numerous Carrier and Babine bands, who now wondered why no permanent post was established in their midst by the missionaries. The presence of a resident priest had become so much the

more necessary there as, consequent on the gold discoveries in the Omineca district, a few white men, generally not the best representatives of their race, were temporarily settling among them.

Father Le Jacq had then an illustration of the difficulties their presence was creating. Quite a series of questions were one day put to him, which had for object topics usually considered as alien to the native mental make-up.

"What is a judge?" asked the chief of Fond du Lac (Fraser Lake).

After the proper information had been vouchsafed, the Indian wanted to know what authority such an official had to condemn a man to death, and, above all, whether the person hanged by his order could go to heaven. Finally, he disembosomed himself of the object of his preoccupations by relating the following story:

One of the minor chiefs of the Babine tribe had bought a sack of flour of an American trader; but when the sack was opened in the presence of a crowd of Indians to whom its contents were to be distributed, it was found to contain nothing but ashes. Therefore, it was immediately returned by Chœnnih, the brother of Father Le Jacq's informant; but the trader would not take it back, pretending that they wanted to make him the victim of a bad joke. After two or three days' deliberations, the Indians came to the conclusion that, since a sack of flour had been paid for in good beaver skins, a good sack of flour

they must have. Chœnnih and another Babine then forcibly took from the store the equivalent of the petty chief's furs.

A few days afterwards, Judge O'Reilly happened to pass by the Babine village. The American laid a formal complaint before the magistrate, and as a result Chœnnih was arrested. As there was no proper interpreter to tell the Indians' version, O'Reilly condemned him to six months' imprisonment.

The Indian was sullenly following up the precipitous trail across the Babine mountains on his way to the place of confinement, pondering over the sort of justice that was meted out by the pale-faced strangers, when, having succeeded in disengaging his hands from the iron cuffs that bound them, he pounced upon the two whites who preceded him on the slope of a precipice, and, in less time than it takes to write it, he had hurled them to the bottom of the hill, an operation which was repeated in connection with the third man before he had time to recover from his surprise. Chœnnih was again a free man; but the whites being so incomprehensible in their administration of justice, would he not be hanged for his escape if caught again? If so, what of his future in the next world? Hence the chief's questions to Father Le Jacq.

For such and many other reasons, it was evident that the establishment of a mission was urgently demanded in the north. The Indians of the district

certainly deserved it. Even in the absence of a priest they endeavoured to conform their conduct to his teaching, faithfully keeping up the organization for the repression of vice established among them, observing the Lord's Day and the Church holidays, as well as the Friday abstinence, as if they had been Christians, and scarcely ever failing to say in common their morning and evening prayers.

Even the Journal of the traders at Fort St. James (Stuart Lake) is a witness to the fidelity of the natives to the chief observances of the Church of their choice. Here are two of its entries:

"*Good Friday,* April 15th, 1870—A collection of Indians from all quarters to hold out mass (?!) till Easter Sunday. Singing and praying is now quite the order of the day in the church."

"*Easter Sunday.*—Holy ceremonies kept by the men[2] and Indians."

Therefore, Brother Georges Blanchet, who had concluded his ecclesiastical studies some twenty-five years before, was ordained priest in 1872, to serve as a socius to the superior of the new mission, Father Le Jacq, and both went up to Stuart Lake in the spring of 1873 to establish the post which was thenceforth to bear the name of Our Lady of Good Hope. A short distance from Fort St. James, Father Blanchet put up a temporary house and commenced the construction of a church which was to become the pride of the North.

[2]That is, the white or halfbreed employees of the fort.

Father Blanchet's ordination scarcely added to the number of the clergy during the first half of 1873; for on January 29th of that year a priest whose name has already appeared in these pages, Rev. Florimond Gendre, had departed this life while stationed at Lake Okanagan.

Meantime Bishop Demers' succession remained an object of dread to every priest in the west and elsewhere.[3] After an interim of almost two years, his place was finally taken up by Rev. Charles Joseph Seghers, the able priest whom we have already mentioned more than once. Preconised Bishop of Vancouver Island on March 21, 1873, he was consecrated on the 29th of the following June.

Less than a year had elapsed when the energetic prelate set sail for the west coast of his island diocese, taking with him Rev. A. Brabant. A suitable spot was chosen for a missionary station, which soon became known as Hesquiat. This was an entirely new place, where the young priest was destined to pass no less than thirty-four years of his life, in perfect isolation from the sweets, as well as the turmoils, of civilized life.

With the help of Rev. Mr. Rondeau, he put up mission buildings, wherein the first mass was said on July 5, 1875. After the departure of the older

[3]It was first offered to the Oblates, and a father of that Congregation was even proposed therefor; but the Superior-General would not entertain the proposition. Then a Rev. Mr. Morrison, of the Province of Quebec, was appointed, and his bulls expedited; but the nominee stoutly declined the honor, and Rome did not insist.

REV. MR. BRABANT

priest, Mr. Brabant was left alone to face the numberless privations and dangers that were to be his among Indians he could not at first understand: dangers from the waves, dangers from epidemics, and even dangers from the malice of man.

He had scarcely had time to make himself at home in his new quarters when smallpox broke out among his people. He then had not only to vaccinate them, but to nurse the sick and bury the dead, as the living so dreaded the disease that they would scarcely help to dig graves.

The chief of the village had been particularly afflicted by the death of near relatives. Brooding over his misfortune, he one day let go the contents of a gun at the devoted priest, inflicting an ugly wound in his hand, after which he deliberately shot him as he was bathing his bleeding hand in a stream, hitting him in the back.

Mr. Brabant was then in a very unenviable plight indeed. His position became even worse when some friendly natives having divested him of his coat and under-clothing, they saw the blood spurting out of a serious wound. They then lost heart one after the other, and walked out of the room to tell their people that the priest was dying. Truth to say, he was himself of the same opinion, and he began to make his preparations to meet the Sovereign Judge. The murderous attack had taken place on October 28, 1875.[4]

[4]The would-be murderer was afterwards found dead in the woods, evidently the victim of suicide.

The poor missionary being away from all white help, suffered terribly of inflammation in both wounds. Then, taken to Victoria for treatment, it was with the greatest difficulty that he saved his hand from the knife of the surgeon, who thought an amputation necessary, which would have perpetually unfitted the priest for the service of the altars. Fortunately for the patient, Bishop Seghers had started that very year St. Joseph's Hospital, which he confided to the Sisters of St. Ann, whose careful management soon ensured for the institution a remarkable degree of prosperity.

REV. MR. BRABANT'S SIGNATURE.

After having been in the doctor's hands for nearly five months, the missionary returned to the scene of his labours and dangers, which he reached on March 23, 1876. In spite of the long apathy of his people, he lived to see the consoling results of his perseverance and pious industry. Many and trying were the years he passed in his surf-beaten post without any apparent cause for self-gratulation, especially as he would not commit the irreparable error of admitting into the Church savages whose hearts were really pagan.

This long period of seemingly useless battling against vice and superstition was so much the more painful as Brabant had commenced his apostolate

by a scene which was as consoling as it is uncommon in the modern annals of the Church. On April 26, 1874, he had regenerated no less than 177 children in one day, or rather at a stretch, a feat which, to our knowledge, was never outdone on the Pacific or elsewhere within our times. Commenced at nine o'clock in the morning, that memorable ceremony lasted till five in the afternoon.

Just one month before, March, 1874, D'Herbomez's missionaries abandoned St. Michael's Mission, a post which from the start had been a source of annoyance and expense without any corresponding results in the religious line.

Less stupendous than the first-fruits of Mr. Brabant's ministry were the results of apostolic zeal in the northern part of the mainland; yet the labourers recently settled there were neither idle nor unsuccessful. Few missionaries have been more painstaking or devoted than the director of the new mission of Our Lady of Good Hope. Even the most casual observer, though of very different religious persuasion, could not help testifying to his great activity and the gratifying outcome of his exertions among the Indians. Witness the following short quotation from the work of a Protestant minister, Rev. Dr. Gordon, who saw him at work:

"On our way we met Père Lejacques, the missionary of this district, whose charge embraces the whole territory between the forks of the Skeena and Fort McLeod, east and west, and between Fort Con-

nolly and Fort St. George,[5] north and south. After leaving the valley of the Skeena and of the Nasse, all the Christian Indians of the interior throughout this northern district are Roman Catholic. The mission is under the direction of the Oblate Fathers, and the missionaries, if all like the devoted Père Lejacques, are 'in journeyings often and in labours abundant.' "[6]

Concerning the most distant portion of the same priest's flock, Mr. Gordon says that "among our packers was the Achwilgate prince, as we called him. . . . It was gratifying to notice that they had prayers each evening, one of their own number leading their service."[7]

The Sékanais, in his opinion, "appear to be throughout this district quiet, trustworthy and industrious."[8] As to the mission itself and the adjoining settlement to which it had given rise, he remarks that "about a mile above the fort there is an Indian village possessing a pretty little church, and houses which have an air of neatness and cleanliness not always found among the Indians."[9]

[5] *Sic* for Fort George.
[6] "Mountain and Prairie," p. 123. London, 1880.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 90.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 134.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

CHAPTER XLI.

BISHOP DURIEU AND HIS MISSIONARY SYSTEM.

1875-1880.

The good already achieved at Stuart Lake and in the other missions was to be perfected and consolidated with the advent to power of a man who, on the mainland of British Columbia has become typical of the far-seeing and successful missionary. Bishop D'Herbomez, whose state of health had scarcely ever been satisfactory, was no longer equal to the task of visiting the new posts of his immense vicariate-apostolic. He therefore applied for a coadjutor, and Father Durieu was preconised Bishop of Marcopolis in June, 1875, and consecrated at New Westminster on the 24th of the following October. The consecrating prelate, Mgr. D'Herbomez, was assisted by Mgr. Lootens, Vicar-Apostolic of Idaho, and Mgr. Seghers, of Victoria.

Born at St. Pal-de-Mons, diocese of Le Puy, France, on December 4, 1830, Pierre Paul Durieu came to the Pacific December 12, 1859, having been ordained priest March 11, 1854. Endowed with few of those brilliant qualities of the mind which command for their possessor the plaudits of the world, he had from the start the knack of discerning the fact, which so many seem to overlook, that the In-

dian differs from the white infinitely more in his psychic make-up than in his personal appearance.

The Indian missions of the mainland of British Columbia have become almost as famous as the Jesuit reductions of Paraguay. Before we proceed with our narrative, we must be allowed to pay our meed of praise to the memory of him who, after God, was chiefly responsible for their success, and have a few words of explanation concerning his method, or system, as applied to the management of Indians.

The American Indian is a being possessed of aspirations, ways of thinking and standards of judgment which are entirely different from ours. To attempt to win him over to religion, and especially to keep

BISHOP DURIEU'S SIGNATURE.

him faithful to its moral obligations, by the methods in vogue among ordinary parish priests would be to court defeat and ultimate failure. A degraded creature, who partakes more of the child than of the adult, without being blessed with the innocence of the former or the control over the passions of the latter, the redskin must be treated with the firmness, the prudence and the foresight required by the government of youth, to which must be added not a little perspicacity, so that the wiles of a naturally shrewd, though naive, nature might not lead to false conclusions. Above all, the missionary that would suc-

ceed among the Indians must aim higher to hit lower. Without stretching too much the principles of theology, he should ask for more, because he is sure to get less.

These characteristics, Bishop Durieu had grasped in their entirety, and he made them the basis of his missionary system. Being a grown-up child, the native must be constantly watched, often reproved, and his persevering powers at times tested. Hence the establishment of the watchmen, who are the eyes of the village chief. But a correction cannot be administered without the proper means of enforcing orders: this accounts for the presence among Durieu's neophytes of the so-called "soldiers," or policemen, who are the arms of the chief, whose rôle in the native social economy is that of the head in a well-organized body.

With the spiritual progress of the people still another, and more important, office has come into existence. This is that of the "Eucharist watchman," who to-day renders communicants or the candidates for the first communion the same services as the chiefs did formerly to common people. The duties of these chiefs are now regarded as partaking more of a civil or temporal character. That watchman virtually replaces the priest when he is absent: he comforts the weak and the afflicted, stirs up the lukewarm, and raises up the fallen by kind words and a salutary penance.

This penance may be of a moral or of a corporal

nature, and the love of the same is sedulously inculcated into the faithful. As a consequence, that discipline recalls many points of that in vogue during the first centuries of the Church. Especially during retreats or missions, which are periodically given at relatively short intervals, it is not rare to see Indians, tied up or free, kneeling down or standing up in front of the whole congregation as a means of atoning for public delinquencies.

Such is, in a few words, Bishop Durieu's famous system. It is the key to the wonderful transformation which so many have admired during the lifetime of that greatest of missionaries.

One of the first cares of the new prelate was to visit the different parts of New Caledonia and realize the progress, material and spiritual, accomplished within the new mission of Stuart Lake. From every point of view his journey was successful. This was the summer of 1876. On September 20th of the same year, three Sisters of St. Ann arrived at New Westminster, who were to found an industrial school for the Indian girls of the William's Lake district, while, on Vancouver Island, two young priests, who proved to be a valuable acquisition for the missions of the island diocese, offered their services to Bishop Seghers. These were the Revs. J. N. Lemmens and Joseph Nicolaye, natives of Holland, the first of whom we shall have again to mention in connection with a high station, while of the latter we may say that for fifteen years he devoted himself to

RT. REV. P. P. DURIEU, O.M.I.

First Bishop of New Westminster

the welfare of the west coast Indians prior to ministering to the whites.

On the lower Fraser, some distance from Yale, the Church suffered about this time her first and only serious check in the history of the Pacific coast missions, apart from the aborigines of the north (on the island and corresponding mainland coast), who never took kindly to her moral code and religious ordinances. The Thompson Indians had shown themselves exceptionally slow in accepting the yoke of Christ in exchange for their heathenish rites. On the other hand, an Anglican minister had made their country his special field of labour, who did not scruple to represent the religion of the priest as unnecessarily hard and severe. He particularly took exception to the strictness with which that priest enforced monogamy. "David and Solomon had each hundreds of wives," he would say; "why ask so much of poor Indians?" So it came to pass that this catering to the passions, joined to the usual liberalities, finally had the desired results, and a majority of the Thompson tribe embraced the schism of Henry VIII., though even there God has his elect in the persons of a fervent flock whose members recognize the true Pastor.

We have left Mr. Brabant the victim of a dastardly murderous assault, struggling along against the indifference and superstitious tendencies of the Hesquiat Indians, among whom he counted as yet but one Christian family, though the others did not

refuse, as a rule, to assist at mass on Sundays. They also followed as much as they thought fit of his directions when it was a question of their material welfare. Bishop Seghers gave him, September 29, 1876, an agreeable surprise by calling on him with Mr. Nicolaye. Two days later (October 1st) the prelate blessed the local church, which he put under the patronage of St. Anthonine, in presence of the representatives of five tribes. Then Mr. Nicolaye was left with Mr. Brabant to be initiated into the difficulties of Indian work. On the following 5th of December, the latter made for Barclay Sound, on the same western coast, to arrange for the establishment of a mission in that locality.

On his arrival there, Brabant noticed quite a number of people sitting in front of their houses, as is the wont of the Indians when engaged in no particular work. One of them got up before the newcomers could land and, in an elaborate speech, began to abuse the missionary who, he declared, was not wanted and must not dare come ashore.

But the priest was equal to the occasion. Knowing that the aborigines have a superstitious dread lest their words be couched on paper, he quietly took up his pocket-book, and pretended to write down the gist of the man's argument. Which seeing, the latter immediately stopped and disappeared behind one of the houses. Then the chief of the village welcomed the priest's party.

Apparently disgusted at the little headway the

Hesquiat mission was making, Rev. Mr. Nicolaye profited by the passage (March 25, 1877), of a schooner to leave for Barclay Sound and Victoria. On the following 26th of April he returned to Mr. Brabant with orders from his bishop that the latter should at once repair to headquarters, to attend a synod at which all the other priests of the diocese were to be present.

On his way to the Yukon, where he intended to establish missionary stations, Bishop Seghers commissioned Mr. Brabant to go and superintend the erection of mission buildings at Namukamus, Barclay Sound. Pursuant to these orders, that gentleman left, April 24, 1877, and, with the aid of a French Canadian named Morin, he put up first a cabin twelve feet square, and then a church 64 by 26, wherein he said mass for the first time on the following Christmas. Mr. Nicolaye was appointed the first resident pastor of the new mission, which was dedicated to St. Leo the Great.

Shortly thereafter, the interests of education were promoted by the establishment, May 15, 1877, of a day school at Nanaimo. The Sisters of St. Ann, to the number of three, were the teachers.

Returning to the mainland, we perceive in the north still fresh traces of the enthusiasm with which the Carriers of Stuart Lake and other points received Bishop Durieu in the course of his 1876 visitation. In the fall of the following year, those Indians saw a prelate of a different kind arrive from

the east. This was none other than the Anglican Bishop Bompas, the quondam adversary of the Catholic missionaries along the Mackenzie. That gentleman was repairing to the Pacific coast, with a view to reconciling with the authorities of his denomination an able man and most successful Indian organizer, Mr. William Duncan, of Metlakahtla. Although his work had so far been done under the auspices and with the material assistance of an Anglican society, Duncan was too good a Protestant not to claim the privilege of doing as he pleased and of "protesting" against episcopal interference, even in matters which are generally regarded as essential.

Bompas arrived at Fort St. James in the very first days of November, 1877, and, in spite of the late season and the reluctance of the Indians to accompany him (as they foresaw they would have no means of returning), he left on the 7th for Babine and the Skeena.

The Anglican dignitary was now treading purely Catholic ground, and could do but little in the way of proselytizing. Yet he found means of deriding in presence of the Indians those practices which are distinctly Catholic, declaring in words which the Carriers still repeat in the peculiar dialect and with the droning intonation proper to the eastern Dénés: "God is a spirit and not brass," as if the good man had been under the impression that his hearers believed the contrary because they wore brass crosses.

However, thanks to the express directions of

Father Le Jacq, the Indians were kind to the wayfarer, while they openly pitied him for what they considered his ignorance concerning their real faith and the reason of their practices. Bishop Bompas himself admitted it afterwards, and his biographer says in this connection: "The Babine Indians in this region, being all Roman Catholics, were naturally suspicious of a Church of England missionary. 'However,' said the bishop, 'they treated us well.' "[1]

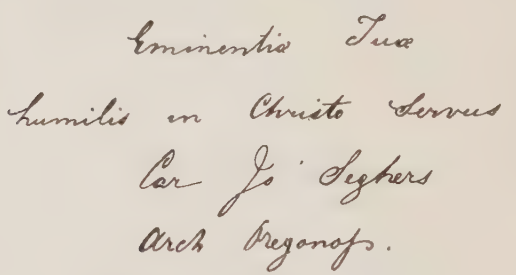
For 1878 we have to chronicle the foundation of a mission at Kamloops, on the mainland, which was made possible by the recall of Father Chirouse from the Indian school of Tulalip, Wash. He was the last of the Oregon Oblates to work on American soil, as he had been one of the four priests of that Order who first came to consecrate their energies to mission work there.

In the course of the same year, the Bishop of Vancouver Island opened churches at Comox and Nanaimo. One had first been erected at the latter place in the course of 1864, which was put under the patronage of St. Peter. The original church put up by the Oblates at Esquimalt having been replaced by a better building, this was blessed in 1879 with St. Joseph as patron.

[1] "An Apostle of the North," by Rev. H. A. Cody, p. 194. New York, 1908. It may be worth remarking that Bompas was then absolutely in the hands of the hated "Romish" priest. Had Father Le Jacq chosen to act towards him then as Bompas had done towards the Catholic missionaries of the Yukon, his position would not have been an enviable one, considering that the influence of the priest throughout the Stuart Lake district was incomparably superior to that ever possessed by any Protestant missionary over his people.

Furthermore, the ranks of the British Columbia clergy were enlarged in 1879 by the coming to the mainland of Fathers Jean-Marie Le Jeune and Eugène C. Chirouse, the latter a near relative of the worthy missionary we have just mentioned, and, on Vancouver Island, of Rev. J. A. Van Nevel, who reached Victoria on December 12th. All of these have shown themselves true apostolic men, and are still actively engaged in the field of the Pacific missions.

By January 26th of that year, Bishop Seghers had surprised his friend of Hesquiat with the news that he was going to Oregon City, as coadjutor to



ARCHBISHOP SEGHERS' SIGNATURE.

Archbishop Blanchet. As a matter of fact, the transfer had already been effected on December 10th of the preceding year. On December 20, 1880, Seghers succeeded the venerable Blanchet on the archiepiscopal See of Oregon. As a consequence, Rev. Jean-Baptiste Brondel, a priest who had lately been in charge of Steilacom, Washington Territory, was consecrated for the bishopric of Vancouver

Island by the retiring prelate, now Archbishop Seghers. The ceremony took place at Victoria, on December 14, 1879.[2]

About this time a valuable recruit took his place in the ranks of the island clergy. This was Rev. Gustavus Donckel, who was soon after stationed among the Cowichan Indians, whose pastor he was for about ten years.

Seven months after Brondel's consecration, on July 26, 1880, Fathers Coccola, Chiappini and Morice, of the Oblate Order, reached his episcopal city on their way to New Westminster. They were as yet but scholastic brothers, and might be considered as part of the wreckage scattered to all the points of the compass by the anti-Christian storm that was commencing to agitate France, the former mother and protectress of foreign missions.

[2]Mgr. Brondel was a native of Maines, Belgium, where he was born in 1849.

CHAPTER XLII.

SOARING STILL HIGHER.

1880-1886.

The same year, 1880, was practically the dawn of a new era for the Church in British Columbia. The Canadian Pacific Railway, which was to make a nation of provinces hitherto connected only by the political tie, was already in sight. The workingmen engaged in its construction, no less than the immigrants whom it was to bring to the Pacific, combined to draw the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities to the fact that the time was passing away when the Indian missions were the exclusive field in which the apostolic labourers of the mainland were to display their zeal. True, many posts were still, and remained long, chiefly, if not entirely, concerned with the natives; but Victoria, Esquimalt and Nanaimo, on the island, with New Westminster, Yale and Kamloops, on the mainland, were already posing as towns, if not cities, the spiritual interests of which must be looked after.

Even the Indian missions were on the eve of a gradual transformation, at least on the coast, where Bishop Durieu held sway with the younger Father Chirouse as a zealous auxiliary. The first years of probation had passed, and the missionary prelate

INDIAN BRASS BANDS

who, with his system of overseers and public penances, had reproduced on the Pacific the Church of the first centuries, was soon to make his beloved missions advance to the more elaborate stage of the medieval Church, with her beautiful ceremonies and her religious plays or "mysteries."

Before we introduce the reader to this new phase in the missions of the Pacific, we may glance at the general and particular state of the two ecclesiastical divisions to the west of the Rocky Mountains. The vicariate-apostolic then (1880) counted seventeen priests, all Oblates, with sixteen brothers of the same Order in seven missions, which had a large number of outposts. These were presided over by two bishops, one of whom, the coadjutor, practically passed his whole life among the Indians. At New Westminster there was a regular parish for the whites, and a church that was the religious rendezvous of numerous Indians from all quarters. Three priests and four brothers were attached to that post. The Sisters of St. Ann directed an academy, and Oblate brothers taught in a college presided over by a priest of their Congregation.

St. Mary's Mission was exclusively for the natives of the Lower Fraser valley, though its church, which was the largest in the whole vicariate, at times admitted within its walls large numbers from other tribes, gathered there for special courses of instructions and religious exercises. That station had then for personnel two priests, three scholastic, and as

many lay, brothers. Under the wise supervision of Father Carion, who had come to the Pacific immediately after the Franco-German war, were two industrial schools, one for the Indian boys, in the immediate care of Brother Henry (formerly a steamer captain), and another for the girls of the same tribes, presided over by Sister Luména.

At the junction of the North with the South Thompson was the village of Kamloops. Slightly below stood St. Louis Mission, where two fathers, aided for the temporal concerns by a lay brother, attended to the spiritual needs of the local and neighbouring whites, but especially to those of the still numerous Indians within its territory. Three Sisters of St. Ann had just opened (March, 1880), a convent school for the convenience of the white children of Kamloops and vicinity.

Further east was the Okanagan mission, which occupied two priests and as many brothers. Then, in the southeastern corner of British Columbia, not far from the Rocky Mountains, the Oblates had some years before (1874) added to the field they already cultivated in the Pacific province the mission of the Kootenays vacated by the Jesuit fathers to whom its foundation was due. Under the patronage of St. Eugene, it had become the headquarters of Father Fouquet who, with a clerical socius and a lay brother, was enjoying the sweets of a perfect seclusion from the rest of the world.

St. Joseph was the patron of William's Lake mis-

sion. Thence the missionaries periodically visited the Shushwaps, the Chilcotins and some of the southern Carriers. Thence also the Caribou miners were ministered to by Father McGuckin or one of the three priests under him. A school for girls, established near the local church, was conducted by four Sisters of St. Ann, while a similar institution for boys had also been started there on December 9, 1873, which was still fairly flourishing, though it had seen better days. The mission fathers were aided by two lay brothers.

Finally, the distant Church of Stuart Lake was in a fair way towards prosperity. Yet, by the end of the summer, 1880, it was, as it were, under a cloud owing to the departure of Father Le Jacq, whose services were needed at Kamloops. The Dénés of the north appreciated his devotion to their interests, and for some time resented his removal from among them. He was succeeded by Father Marchal.

On Vancouver Island, the number of the clergy was so limited that few posts, or even outposts, could be founded. Bishop Brondel, aided by one or two priests, attended to the Catholics of the provincial capital. At Barclay Sound, Mr. Nicolaye was making fair headway with his Indians, while nearer Victoria Mr. Lemmens was ruining his health in his efforts to make decent Christians out of natives who were so much the farther from the kingdom of God as they were nearer our much boasted civilization, and the veteran Mr. Mandart was doing all he could

to save the Sanich, after he had filled the post of director of St. Louis College, at the capital.

Belonging to the same diocese was another priest it remains for us to mention, though just then he happened to be stationed outside of Canada. This was the Rev. J. Althoff, a native of Holland, who had made his theological studies at the American College of Louvain, and had reached Victoria in the fall of 1878. He was then (1880) at Wrangell, Alaska, but was soon to be appointed to the Nanaimo mission, on the island, whence, however, in the course of a year or two, he was to return north, making this time his headquarters at Juneau.

Lastly, we find at the same period the persevering missionary of Hesquiat still waiting for the days of grace among his people. In the following year, June, 1881, he was building for the Indians of Ahousat, eighteen miles from Hesquiat, a modest church, to which were annexed two rooms to be used as a house and a sacristy.

Meantime, the question of education had been attracting some attention on the mainland. Bishop D'Herbomez then sustained a controversy on this subject of paramount importance. He exposed in a New Westminster paper the doctrines and policy of the Church on the question, in a series of letters which were reprinted in pamphlet form on a hand press, at St. Mary's, and distributed to all the members of the British Columbia Legislature.

The prelate was scarcely through with this little

work when, in the spring of 1882, his vicariate received a representative of the Oblate General in the person of Father Martinet, whom, in spite of his age and infirmities, he accompanied to most of the missionary stations under him. Father Martinet's visit was productive of lasting good. Bishop and visitor then came to an agreement as to an equitable division between the diocese and the Oblate Order of the properties which had so far been managed exclusively by the Oblates, thus leaving a door open for the secular priests to come and profit by the labours of the pioneers.

Revs. Coccola and Chiappini had been ordained at St. Mary's Mission during Lent, 1881; Brother Morice was likewise raised to the priesthood, at the same place and by the same prelate, Mgr. D'Herbomez, on July 2, 1882.

The vales and mountain sides of British Columbia were then echoing the sound of numberless axes and picks, which were cutting a way for the Canadian Pacific Railway throughout the Pacific province. This meant hundreds, nay thousands, of workingmen, many of whom were Catholics. Father Le Jeune and, later on, Father Coccola attended to the needs of their souls from St. Mary's and Kamloops respectively, while Father Morice was being sent, July, 1882, to William's Lake mission. On his way north that young priest travelled in the company of the veteran Father Pandosy, who was to assume a month later the direction of Stuart Lake mission.

Early in the fall of the same year, Father McGuckin bade farewell to William's Lake, where he had rendered yeoman service to the whites scattered over the northern valleys. His destination was New Westminster. There he was to fill the double post of parish priest and procurator of the vicariate-apostolic. Both offices had so far been held by Father Horris, now almost completely exhausted by overwork. One of Father McGuckin's conquests was the Hon. J. F. McCreight, a Supreme Court judge who left a Protestant sect for the true Church, of which he remained to his death a staunch and pious adherent.

In the course of 1883 the promising mission of Stuart Lake greeted again Bishop Durieu, on a tour of episcopal inspection. The Carriers, Babines and Sékanais within its boundaries were still smarting under the pain caused by the removal of their beloved Father Le Jacq, now superior at Kamloops. The visiting prelate consoled them, and strengthened their faith by the introduction of ceremonies and Eucharistic devotions for which they had not so far been judged to be ripe.

On Vancouver Island, Bishop Brondel was not long spared to the Church of Victoria. In 1884 he was transferred to the new diocese of Helena, Montana. In prevision of this change Rev. Mr. Jonckau was named in 1883 to succeed him as Bishop of Vancouver Island; but he pleaded ill-health and, armed with a doctor's certificate, he evaded the burden

which he deemed beyond his strength. Mgr. Seghers was then at Rome. As Propaganda was exercised over the question of finding a successor to Bishop Brondel, the archbishop, in his zeal for the poor missions of Alaska, which then belonged to the diocese of Vancouver Island, generously volunteered to return to his old field of action, where he was welcomed back in the course of 1885.

On the mainland God was sparing the lives of Mgr. D'Herbomez and his devoted coadjutor. With a greater continuity at the helm, real progress was more easy. The northern Indians were gradually becoming reconciled to the loss of their first pastor; from William's Lake Father Morice was regularly sallying out to evangelize the Chilcotin Indians, a rather wild Déné tribe whose language he was acquiring; Father Le Jeune was doing the same for the benefit of the Thompson, and afterwards the Shushwaps; Father Chirouse, junior, utilized the resources of his zeal on behalf of the aborigines of the sea coast, Lillooet and Douglas, as well as of the Lower Fraser; Father Le Jacq was governing the post of Kamloops and occasionally attending to the needs of the Shushwaps, while Father Fouquet was crowning a life of usefulness by continuing the good commenced by the Jesuits among the Kootenay Indians.

From 1884 dates a notable change of heart in the hitherto obdurate Hesquiats of Mr. Brabant, and the Cloyoquot Indians were now favoured with the min-

istrations of Mr. Van Nevel, who was to remain five years their pastor.

Another sign of progress was the arrival, in the course of 1886, of representatives of a new Institute of women specially destined for the care of the sick. These were Sisters of Providence, who then reached New Westminster, where they soon after erected a fine hospital.

Unfortunately all these advantages were soon to be counterbalanced by a catastrophe so sudden and so unusual that it took the world by surprise. Led by his zeal for the salvation of souls in distant Alaska, Bishop Seghers had set out on an expedition along the Yukon, in the company of a few natives as guides and an American, named Francis Fuller, who was to act as a body servant. Such a journey entailed untold hardships, and either because these affected the mind of the latter, or because his courage was not up to the task of enduring them with equanimity, it gradually became evident that he was seriously discontented.

We regret to say that a white man, who had ever proved an unscrupulous enemy of the Catholic missions in Alaska, stooped low enough to take advantage of that unsatisfactory mental condition of the poor man to still embitter him against his Bishop by trumped up charges which were as puerile as, under the circumstances, they were fraught with momentous possibilities.

Early in the morning of November 28, 1886, Mgr.

Seghers was peacefully resting after a hard day's travelling, when he was suddenly aroused from his dreams by a gruff voice at the door of the semi-subterranean hut in which he had spent the night.

"Get up, Bishop," he heard his man cry out in an excited tone.

This was not the friendly morning call to which he had a right. Yet Seghers partially rose and sat on his bedding preparatory to lifting his heart to God. But he scarcely had time to collect his thoughts, for presently the barrel of a gun appeared threateningly in front of him. Realizing his situation, the prelate bowed his head down and crossed his hands over his breast. Then almost immediately a flash and a loud report told of an awful deed: the Bishop of Vancouver Island had been shot by his servant![1]

Great was the shock caused to the civilized world by this horrible murder. The already sorely tried missions of Vancouver Island especially felt the blow: after so many changes in their direction, they were again without a head, and the scattered flock without a chief pastor!

Another calamity which marked the same year, 1886, affected the mainland of the province. We mean the complete destruction by fire of the nascent

[1]According to Warburton Pike, a noted traveller and hunter, who was on the spot shortly after the horrible deed, "a mild rebuke had been administered by the archbishop overnight for negligence in some small matter, and that, according to the Indian who was travelling with them at the time, was the only reason to account for the murder" ("Through the Subarctic Forest," p. 241. London, 1896).

town of Vancouver, at the entrance of Burrard Inlet. The preceding year the C. P. R. had pushed its operations as far as that magnificent harbour, giving rise to a settlement which already boasted some 3,000 inhabitants, when, on the 13th of June, 1886, a fierce wind carried to its very heart a bush fire which had been for some time raging in the vicinity of the new town. Practically everything disappeared and fifty lives were lost in the conflagration which ensued. A secular priest, Rev. Mr. Fay, the first of his class stationed on the mainland, had commenced parish work among the few hundreds of Catholics in the place: he lost everything except the set of vestments he used in the celebration of mass.

But, Phœnix-like, a new and better constructed town soon grew up on the ashes of the old, and with it a Catholic church building of modest dimensions, which was opened to public worship in the course of October, 1886. To that date may, therefore, be ascribed the foundation of the now flourishing parish of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary.

Almost two years elapsed before the Church of Vancouver Island (or Victoria) was relieved of her widowhood. Then the Rev. Mr. Lemmens consented to assume the mantle stained with the blood of Bishop Seghers. Rev. John Nicholas Lemmens was born June 3, 1850, at Schimmert, Holland. He had received the order of priesthood on March 25, 1875, and since his arrival at Victoria he had been a zealous worker in the Lord's vineyard. In 1885 he had

RT. REV. J. N. LEMMENS

Bishop of Vancouver Island

founded a mission at Cloyoquot, on the west coast of the island, whose pastor he remained until his appointment to the vacant bishopric. On June 25th, Mr. Brabant happening to pass by, found him "in his shirt sleeves, with an axe in his hand, splitting firewood,"[2] a rather unusual preparation to such an exalted office as that of bishop. His consecration took place on August 5, 1888.

In the autumn of the preceding year, the Archbishops of Montreal and St. Boniface, accompanied by the veteran missionary of the western plains, Father Lacombe, came to admire the fruits of Durieu's long-sightedness in his dealings with the aborigines. They were welcomed by the Skwamish Indians, whose neat village lay opposite the young town of Vancouver. Father Lacombe could not restrain the tears. He wept for joy and out of sadness; for joy at seeing Indians so well formed, so fully instructed and such thorough Christians, and out of sadness as he compared them with the natives of the Northwest Territories, for whom he was sacrificing himself.[3]

After this welcome at the terminus of the transcontinental railway line, the coast Indians repaired to St. Mary's Mission, on the Fraser, where they were joined by the tribes whose habitat is within the same valley, as well as by representatives of those of the Kamloops and William's Lake districts. Alto-

[2] "Vancouver Island and its Missions," p. 79.
[3] Letter from Father Le Jacq, 6th November, 1887.

gether, apart from the whites present at the ceremonies, there were at least three thousand natives assembled. Processions of the Blessed Sacrament with ceremonial as gorgeous as possible under the circumstances, general communions of men and of women bearing the badge of the Guard of Honour, public consecrations of the faithful to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, representations of the principal stations of the cross by Indians forming living tableaux and crowned by a final group illustrating the Crucifixion, night celebrations to the accompaniment of fireworks, Chinese lanterns and coloured fires, such were the attractions which, on that and many other occasions, Bishop Durieu offered to his people as incentives to devotion and means of honest recreation.[4]

Almost every year had, in one place or another, some such celebration which, as time went on, became more and more elaborate. These not only touched the hearts of the natives, but made on the whites an impression of which the press and even books soon became the echoes. We choose the appreciation of one of the newspapers which described those events, because that publication, besides being non-Catholic, was one of the first to notice them.

Sixty-six canoes had brought to the Skwamish village crowds of Fraser River Indians for a retreat preached early in June, 1888. Under date June 22nd of the same year, the Vancouver *News-Advertiser*

[4]It goes without saying that all the expenses entailed by those festivities were defrayed by the Indians themselves.

thus described the last ceremonies of the closing day of that retreat:

"For weeks past the little Indian village nestling under the hills at the other side of the Inlet has been the scene of busy preparations and unwonted activity. The every-day calm of the life of those primitive people has been broken by the sound of the hammer and the saw; the bright little houses have become resplendescent in all the glory of fresh paint; the canoes have been overhauled and touched up with vermilion; mysterious looking packages have been constantly arriving from as far east as Montreal, and everything betokened the approach of some great event. It has ever been the policy of the Roman Catholic Church in dealing with the Indians to skillfully make use of their love of display, and, by indulging them in this particular, to draw them closer to its fold. The success that has attended the Church's missionary efforts is evident to all who have had any dealings with the Indians, and the progress that has been made by that people under the guidance of their spiritual fathers is most remarkable.

"Last night witnessed the result of these weeks of preparation—a sight that was both novel and attractive to all who witnessed it, and which must have been most gratifying to the good fathers themselves and their native charges. The celebration was in honour of *Corpus Christi,*[5] a feast that has been held

[5]At least so thought the newspaper man, deceived as he was by the nature of the ceremonies.

in high repute in the Church for ages. Extensive preparations had been made in the village for the event. The main street was hung with festoons of evergreens mingled with coloured lanterns. A shrine was erected on the beach and decorated with the bright colours so pleasing to the native eye. Two altars under elaborate canopies were erected at either end of the village a short distance from the water's edge on rising ground. A large canvas tent or tabernacle was erected just back of the church, and a temporary altar raised which, when its many candles were lighted, presented a really beautiful appearance. The open space to the west of the village was covered with canvas tents, and every house was crowded with visitors.

"The celebration commenced with a solemn service and benediction by His Lordship Bishop Durieu, which was held in the large tabernacle. A more striking scene has seldom been witnessed. The dark rows of kneeling worshippers, the bright altar showing up beautifully in the deepening twilight, the rich vestments of the bishop and attendants all combined to make a picture worthy the brush of a Rembrandt or a Murillo. The effect of the singing was also very striking, the shrill yet musical treble of the women and children being answered antiphonally by the deep bass of the men.

"After the service was over the Indians proceeded to their canoes, which had been decorated with coloured paper lanterns, and the procession was

formed. Instead of paddling as in the old days, the steamer *Etta White* towed them along in pairs. There were 154 canoes in the procession, and the effect of the many-coloured lights reflected on the glass-like surface of the water was really fairy-like. Two Indian bands, one from Fort Douglas and the other belonging to the mission, were amongst the procession and played several of the sweet old tunes of the Catholic Church. In the intervals of playing the Indians chanted hymns, the effect over the water being beautiful. The night was all that could be desired: a nearly full moon hung in the cloudless sky, with hardly the shadow of a breeze to ruffle the calm surface of the inlet. After making a circuit of about a couple of miles, the procession returned to the village, being greeted both on its departure and return with the firing of cannon.

"A large number of people went over from Vancouver to witness the celebration. The steamer *Muriel* had a large scow lashed alongside which was crowded with people, while everything in the shape of a rowboat or canoe was pressed into service and the whole surface of the inlet was dotted with craft."[6]

The entire ceremony was crowned by the solemn consecration of the people to the Sacred Heart, by Bishop Durieu facing an illuminated statue of Our Lord and surrounded by the natives in their canoes ranged in the form of a half-moon.

[6]*The News-Advertiser*, June 22nd, 1883.

CHAPTER XLIII.

FOR MIND AND SOUL.

1887-1895.

We might have chronicled for 1887 the arrival at Victoria of Rev. Joseph Leterme, a worthy priest whose clerical life was spent mostly at, or near, Victoria, and the nomination of Father Coccola to the post of Kootenay, which he was to hold for a period of twelve years, endearing himself to native and white alike. Father Le Jeune had by this time been transferred to Kamloops, and in the north Father Morice was continuing the work so zealously commenced by Father Le Jacq at Stuart Lake, whither he had been sent in August, 1885, and where he was to pass the best nineteen years of his life.

In this connection some reference may be made to the efforts of two British Columbia missionaries to facilitate instruction among the aborigines. Memorizing the long formulas of the catechism, hymns and prayers had so far proved a most tedious and time-absorbing process. To the east of the Rocky Mountains, the missionaries had adopted, generally with some slight changes, the ingenious characters invented by the Rev. James Evans, a Protestant clergyman. But these signs which, from the start, had been intended for the Cree language, were

absolutely unequal to the task of rendering the exceedingly numerous and delicate sounds of the Déné languages.

The very first year of his stay at Stuart Lake, Father Morice devised for the benefit of his charge a system of writing which, syllabic like that of Evans, differed entirely by the nature and arrangement of its component parts. While expressing faithfully the sounds of their very complex language, it was simplicity itself by the way its elements flowed, as it were, from one another, the rational method with which they were grouped, and the ease with which each of them was identified.

This system soon spread among the natives of the north, who learned how to read and write by themselves after a few lessons had been given the children of the principal villages. Some individuals acquired the new science in the space of two or three evenings. Type was then cast and books were printed, which consisted mostly of primers, or readers, and prayer-books containing the full text of the various prayers in use, the catechism, numerous hymns, etc. Nay more, a monthly periodical was printed with the new characters, which brought within the reach of the natives such sacred and profane information as was thought best calculated to benefit them.

In the south, Father Le Jeune had the same end in view when, somewhat later on, he adapted the stenography of the Duployé brothers to the trans-

ᑕᔅᖃᔅ ᑕᕐᓂᑐᖅ

ᓄᓇᕗᑦ *ᑕᐃᔨᒃ ᐅᓂ ᐅᐃᖅᑕ ᓄᓇᕗᑦ

ᐅᒃ 17 ᑕᔅᖃᔅ *1893 ᐅᒃ 7 ᐃᑕᐅ

☞ᑐᑕᖅᖃᔅ ᑐᓴᐅᖃᓂ ᐃ, ᐊᐁ ᐅᑎᐄ <ᑕᖅᐅᓚᑐᑕ ᐊᐅᑭᓚᖅ☜

·ᓴ ᑕᖃᒃᑐ ᐅᕕ ᖁᐱᐅᓂ ᐱᓚᕐᓂ ᑕᖃᕐᓂᑦ, ᔅ·

*ᑕᐃᔨᒃᑎ ᐅᓂ. —ᐅᒃ 8 ᐃᑕᓂ ᐱᒃ 9// ᑎᓂ ᐅᓂ ᐅᐯᓂᓀ ᙏ ᐅᑐᙏ ᓀᓀ ᑕᐅᔅᑎᑐ, ᐅᓂᖃᙆ ᐅᐅ ᑕᐅ ᑕᐅᔅᑎᑐ.

—ᐅ ᐃᑕᓂ ᑕ ᐱᒃ 14ᓂ ᑎᓂ ᖁᒃᖃᐅᑐᑕᖃᔅ *ᓀᙏᖃ ᖃ ᕐᓂᖃᙆ.

—*ᓄᖁ-ᐊᑎᓀᑕᑐᓂ *ᓂᑕᖃᑕ, *ᑎᑕᔅ ᐁᙆ· ᐅᓂ, ᐁᒪᕐᐅᑕᒃ ᕐᓂ ᐊᐁ·ᐅᓂ ᐅᑐᓀ ᑎᓀᙆᖅᑐᑕ ᐅᓂᑎᓂ·

*ᑕᑎᐲ ᐅᓂ. —*ᖃᑎ ᐁ·ᐊᓂ ᓀᑐᑕ

*ᕿᐅᐅᙆ ᐅᓂ. —*ᑭᓀ ᑕᙆᕿᐅ.

*ᑎᐅᐅᑎ ᐅᓂ —*ᓂᑕᓀᙆᔅ, ᕿᓂᑐᓀ ᐁᓄ· ᐅᓀ, ᑕᙆᕿᐅ.

*ᓀᙏᖃ. —ᐅᓂ ᐱᐅᓀᑎ *ᑕᓀᙆᓂ ᑕᑎ <ᐅᐅᑐᓀ

ᔅ ᓀᑕ· ᖁᐱᐅᓀ ᐱᓂᕐᓀ ᑕᖃᕐᓀᑦ, ᓴ·

—*ᑲᑐᔨᗅᑦᐅ ᕐᓂᐱᓴ ᐅᓂᑕ ᐅ ᐁᓂᕐᓀᙆ ᖁᑎᖁ ᐅᑲ ᑎᐅᐅᑐᓀᑐᑕ ᐱᑕᐊ ᖃ ᐟᐱᑕᖁ ᐊᐅᖃᐅᑕ.

—ᐅᑎᐅᓀ ᑐᖁ, *ᓀᑲᐅᓂ ᓄᐅᖁᓂ ᐅᓀ, ᖁᓂᐅᑐᓀᙆᐱᙏ ᐅᑕᑲᐅ ᕐᐃᐅ ᐅᑎᙆ ᑲᑎᐱᑐᑕ ᐃᓂᐅ ᐅᓀᐅᑐᓀᑐᑕ.

—*ᙏᓀᕐᓂᑲᓀᓀ ᑕᖃᑲ ᐊᑐᖁᓂᐊᐅ ᐱᙆᐸ, 50$ ᐁᓀᖁᓂᑎ.

—*ᓀᑲᓄᔅᖃᔅᑕᓂ ᐅᑦ ᐅᑎᐅᓀ ᑐᖁ ᖃᑲ ᐅ ᐅᑐᑕᖃᑦ ᑐ ᓀᙆ ᐁ-ᑕᖃᔅ <ᑐᓀᖃᑦ.

—ᑲᑕ· *ᓱᑐᙏᓂ ᐅᐅ ᑐᓱᑎᓀ. ᑐᓱᑎᓀ ᖃᑦ, *ᕿᐅᑦᕿᑎ ᖃ-ᐱᑦᖁ ᐅᑦ ᑎ ᐱᓂᓀ ᑐᐅᓀᑲ.

FIRST PAGE (REDUCED) OF MORICE'S INDIAN PERIODICAL

scription of Chinook. The acquiring of that shorthand was rendered all the more easy as the verbal poverty of that jargon made the repetition of its words more frequent. He, too, besides valuable little books, published a periodical which, for a number of years, did a vast amount of good among the Salish Indians.

Simply for the sake of completing our sketch of missionary life among the natives of British Columbia, and to show that even there trials were not wanting, we may be permitted to present the reader with a twofold instance of the difficulties which that life involved in the northern part of the province. On a cold February evening, the director of Stuart Lake mission was returning from Fort Babine, 160 miles distant from his headquarters, after having preached a retreat to the natives who frequented that post, when he reached with his dog train a long inlet in the lake on which lay his residence. He had repeatedly warned his guides that he must be home by Saturday night, so that he might not miss the Sunday mass, for which some of the requisites were now wanting in his travelling outfit. To accomplish this it was absolutely necessary that a village on the lake, called Yœkooche, should be made by Friday. That date had now been reached, and the party was still far from that place.

The priest's companions, four burly Babine Indians, had passed the five preceding days of the week in a sort of journeying for the slowness of which

they blamed the weather, and had landed at dusk as one of them had his feet frozen. They now intended to camp instead of trying to get to Yœkooche, pretexting also the ever-increasing thickness of the snow on the ice and unmistakable evidences of an approaching storm. Therefore, though not as yet inured to snowshoeing without a beaten track, the missionary left them, in spite of their protests that he was sure to get frozen, and made for the place whence he knew that he should depart early next morning if he was to get home for the following Sunday.

It may have been 5 P.M. Darkness had now spread over lake and forest, and, after a few miles of painful walking through a deep snow, the weather, which had so far been exceptionally severe, developed into a regular blizzard. Under the sting of the frost, the rocks and trees on the shore were at short intervals sending forth detonations as of cannon; the wind whined plaintively through the spruces, then burst into deafening squalls, which swept the fresh snow from the ice and raised it in immense clouds, lashing the face of the wayfarer as one would with a whip.

The missionary was painfully musing on the appositeness of the Indians' warning when lo! two of them overtook him, laden with his blankets. By walking in their footsteps, he was momentarily endowed with a new lease of vigour. But it was bitterly cold: the two packers must proceed at a good

speed if they are to keep themselves from freezing. On the other hand, already tired out and exhausted, the priest could not keep up with them, and very soon the Indians were out of sight. Now fully alive to the danger of being left alone in that terrible storm, especially at a time when the unspeakable *mal de raquettes*[1] had him in its grip, the priest shouted to them requests for assistance. But no answer was vouchsafed other than the derisive howling of the hurricane.

What was to be done? To walk even at a slow pace had become impossible; resting on the ice without any shelter seemed to be courting death, and then should the traveller survive a halt in the midst of the storm, he felt that, under the circumstances, he would not be able to put on again his awkward foot-gear, which meant that further progress could not then be thought of. But human endurance has limits: whether he was to die or not, the missionary must lay down. Commending himself to God, he took off his snowshoes and stretched himself on the ice, awaiting death or the beneficent effects of rest.

How long he remained on his frigid couch is more than he could say. It seems that it was scarcely half an hour, and, with God's special protection, he lived to go on with his perilous trip. Nay, by sounding the ice in every direction, he had the good fortune of finding under the fresh snow a well-beaten

[1]A peculiar and most painful spraining of the muscles of the legs and feet.

trail, which allowed him to dispense with his snow-shoes. This he carefully followed, stepping as low as possible lest he should lose it. When he reached Yœkooche, the people of the place were reciting their morning prayers. The missionary had been out, supperless, the whole night. Many a long day was he afterwards laid up as a consequence of his awful experience in the midst of the blizzard; but his end had been accomplished: he had not missed mass on a Sunday.

At times danger was due more to human passions than to the inclemency of the elements. Because, after many trials, the Babines would not do away with those heathenish practices which Father Nobili had prematurely flattered himself with having extirpated from among them, the same Babine Indians had, on the advice of Bishop D'Herbomez, been left to themselves for a number of years. As a consequence, all sorts of disorders had crept back into the tribe. Having had to revisit them in order to reconcile to God one of their chiefs in danger of death, Father Morice succeeded, with the help of the better disposed among them, in making all but one of the divorced persons return to their lawful spouses. Even the subject of this exception finally yielded to his entreaties and promised to break off the unholy union he had contracted with an unbaptized woman, though he well knew that said woman was averse to leaving him.

The missionary had just commenced to enjoy a

well-merited rest in his cabin, an unfinished building some little distance from the village, when, about midnight, he was startled out of his sleep by the voice of a woman, evidently in a great passion, who tried to break open his door.

"Patrick, Patrick," she called out, "come out quickly! They are coming to kill the priest: they may kill you with him!"

It was the mother of Father Morice's companion, who wanted her son away from danger. At the same time, by the shore of the lake an indescribable tumult was keeping everyone awake. Noise as of contending factions, yells and frightful shouting were heard which, on enquiry, proved to proceed from the numerous and ill-famed relatives of the discarded woman just mentioned. It appears that, in her rage at seeing herself abandoned by her paramour, she had picked up a rope and gone to hang herself. The priest being the cause of her death, he had, according to the native code, to pay with his head for her rash action.

Fortunately quite a number of Babines had now come back to their God, and were striving to prevent the foul deed. Hence the tumult.

The missionary made the sacrifice of his life, in case God had ordained that he should fall a martyr to the cause of the indissolubility of the marriage tie, and then composed himself to sleep again as much as this was possible under the circumstances. To make a long story short, the would-be murderers

were at length overpowered, and, in the morning, the cause of the whole trouble was found crouching in the corner of a secluded lodge. She had only feigned to take her own life in order to have her revenge on the priest!

To return to the succession of events, British Columbia Catholics were then (1888) proud of seeing one of their number, a convert from Protestantism, at the head of public affairs in their province, in the person of the Hon. Alexander E. B. Davie. Appointed attorney-general on January 29, 1883, he had, on April 1, 1887, became premier while still holding his previous portfolio. He remained at the helm to the day of his death, which occurred August 1, 1889. A thoroughly upright man, he was "deeply regretted" according to Alex. Begg.[2]

Two days later, his own brother, Theodore, an able lawyer, took his place as attorney-general in the government of the Hon. John Robson, who then succeeded Alexander Davie as premier. On July 2, 1892, Theodore Davie assumed the premiership, while retaining his post of attorney-general, and the general elections held in 1894 sustained him in power. Theodore Davie had likewise renounced Protestantism for the true faith. He died Chief Justice of British Columbia.

But we must not anticipate. We now see at New Westminster Mgr. D'Herbomez suffering to such an extent that he is no more able to fulfil the

[2] "History of British Columbia," p. 548.

duties of his double charge of vicar-apostolic (or superior of priests and people) and of vicar of missions for the Oblates under him. This unsatisfactory state of health had been more pronounced since the voyage he made to Europe to assist at the General Chapter of 1887. Hence, at his request, he was relieved of his functions of vicar of missions, and, by letters dated August 12, 1888, his coadjutor, Bishop Durieu, was invested with the same.

On the following day, an event quietly took place at the new seaport of Vancouver, which was indicative of the faith that was placed in the future of the town. We have already noted the inauguration of a parish there. As no church is complete without a school, especially in countries such as British Columbia where public education is godless, or by euphemism secular, Rev. Mr. Fay, the organizer of the new Catholic centre, took steps towards obtaining nuns for the youth of the same. As in the Pacific province all the teaching nuns were then Sisters of St. Ann, he applied to the provincial house at Victoria, with the result that, on August 13, 1888, three religious of that Institute were landing at Vancouver, who immediately set upon creating a home for themselves and their future pupils. By means of a loan, three lots were secured near the church at a cost of $1,100, and, on August 23, the foundations of St. Ann's Academy were commenced. For several years it was for the sisters a hard struggle with poverty; but the roll of attendance gradu-

ally grew longer, until fifteen sisters had to be employed in teaching the various branches of learning useful to young ladies.

An analogous mark of progress in a different field was the stationing of a priest at Comox, a place on the Island which had hitherto been visited at intervals only. This was one of the first acts of Bishop Lemmens' administration (1889).

Almost a year later, an interesting celebration was attracting a vast concourse of aborigines to a point some forty miles north of Vancouver. In common with the Skwamish of Burrard Inlet, the Sechelt Indians originally formed several villages under as many chiefs. But, emulating the Paraguay missionaries of old, Bishop Durieu had gathered them at a sort of strategic point, a narrow isthmus where most of them were wont to portage goods and canoes, to save many miles of wearisome, and at times dangerous, navigation. The missionary had had the place cleared of the giants of the primeval forest, and made the Indians build comfortable houses with such modern conveniences as were compatible with their circumstances. Thus was the village lighted at night and waterworks established, which involved many a mile of main pipes to reach a lake near the mountain side.

As in a number of other Catholic villages,[3] a brass band with gorgeous uniforms for the players

[3]There are no less than eleven native bands within the southern half of British Columbia alone, all in Catholic villages.

and a commodious stand for the discoursing of sweet music on Sundays and holidays, was established, while pieces of cannon were procured which were destined to celebrate the arrival of the missionary, or enhance the solemnity of the processions of the Blessed Sacrament.

But the crowning glory of the model village was a church 80 feet by 28, with a facade 48 feet wide and two beautiful towers. Commenced October 26, 1889, the building was ready for dedication by the 3rd of June of the following year. With the exception of a white man to direct the work, the construction was the result of the exertions of the Indians themselves, who moreover defrayed all the expenses it entailed, over $3,000. And to say that when Durieu first landed among those Indians, they went so far as to deny him food and lodging, so that he might not be tempted to give them instruction that would do away with their heathenish rites and customs!

Deputations from over a dozen tribes went to assist at the dedication of the new church by Bishop Durieu. Even far-off Stuart Lake was represented by its missionary accompanied by six stalwart men. To describe the astonishment of the northerners when they heard the pantings of the iron horse and, later on, the thundering reports of the "big guns" (cannon), when they witnessed the display of the fireworks, and listened to the entrancing music of the many brass bands called into requisition for the occasion, would be perfectly impossible. It would

be as useless for us to tarry in a description of the series of religious events which gave food for the minds and hearts of the multitude assembled at the Sechelt isthmus.

Unfortunately, the festivities were marred by tidings which cast a gloom over all hearts. As we have seen, the venerable head of the diocese had long been ailing. He was already low when his coadjutor had to leave him for Sechelt. Therefore the shock to clergy and pilgrims was proportionately less severe when they heard of his demise, which took place at New Westminster on June 3, 1890.

Most of the missionaries, including Mgr. Durieu and Bishop Lemmens, of Victoria, accompanied by numerous whites and Indians, then repaired to New Westminster, whence all that was mortal of Mgr. D'Herbomez was taken by special train to St. Mary's Mission for interment (June 6th). There lies the first bishop of the mainland in the simplest of graves, under the wild ferns, and among the priests he had directed in their apostolic labours. A prudent administrator and a kind father to pastors and flocks, he was accompanied to the grave by the regrets of all.

Mgr. Durieu became by his demise the Vicar-Apostolic of British Columbia; but he was the same year (September 2, 1890), promoted to the bishopric of New Westminster, in accordance with the request of the First Provincial Council of St. Boniface, of

A CELEBRATION AT SECHELT

which, as we have seen, he had himself been one of the fathers in July of the preceding year.[4]

The new titular was already old and broken down in health when he assumed his new title. Yet his episcopate was remarkable for the expansion of the Church among the new centres of population created by the advent of the Canadian Pacific Railway. By an unfortunate transaction the valuable property of the Okanagan mission passed into strange hands; but new parishes, such as Revelstoke, Greenwood, Nelson, Fernie, Cranbrook and others, were erected among the whites, some of which were entrusted to secular priests.

Nor were the unfortunate and the fallen among those whites forgotten. On May 23, 1890, there arrived from Ottawa three professed nuns of the Institute of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge, commonly called Sisters of the Good Shepherd, who established an orphanage and a refuge for girls in a suburb of New Westminster.[5]

To return to the clergy. On February 6, 1891, Father Pandosy, the founder of the Okanagan mission and one of the veterans of the Pacific province,

[4]The eastern limits of the new diocese were made to coincide with the summit of the Rocky Mountains, instead of the boundaries of the civil Province of British Columbia.

[5]This establishment became, 4th Oct., 1899, the prey of the flames. The orphans were then handed over to the Sisters of Providence, who, in 1901, built for them an extensive and commodious house. In the meantime a much larger establishment, with most spacious grounds, had been erected for the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in Vancouver, which was occupied on Sept. 19, 1900. Therein orphans and persons practically of all ages and conditions find a safe refuge with the devoted nuns, who now form a numerous community.

passed to a better life after a very short illness, at a distant camp of Indians and away from all confrères. Then, on May 28th of the following year, Father C. Chirouse, his quondam companion across the American plains in 1847, followed him to the grave. In the course of 1891 Rev. Mr. Nicolaye was appointed to minister to the whites in the vicinity of Victoria, and later on those of Ladysmith, likewise on the Island, were added to his flock. Finally, in March of the same year, an Indian industrial school was established on Kuper Island, diocese of Vancouver Island, which was destined to become quite prosperous. Rev. Mr. Donckel, who had so far spent his whole energies in the pursuance of the spiritual welfare of the Cowichan Indians, was entrusted with its management, which he retained practically to the day of his death.

For 1892 we have to record a very different kind of event, which was as sad as it is unusual in the annals of the Catholic missions in fields others than those of China or Corea. Mention has already been made of the public penances administered by Christian chiefs to delinquent subordinates. When these were caused by breaches of morals and propriety, they came to excite, in later years, the wrath of the unscrupulous whites, who could not help seeing in them an implicit condemnation of their own conduct and an effective barrier against misdemeanour with the native women.

It so happened that, in March, 1892, a certain dis-

solute character among the Indians of Lafontaine, a village perched, as it were, on the top of a mountain, was thus punished by her chief for a grave offence against morals. Father Chirouse, junior, was then preaching a retreat in the neighbourhood. A bigoted official of the British Columbia Government thought this an excellent occasion to vent his hostility to the Church, and express in a tangible manner his disapproval of bodily correction among the natives. He therefore caused Father Chirouse to be arrested, together with the Lafontaine chief and four of his officers; but he soon had to momentarily release his prisoners on the payment by sympathizing whites of a bail set at $1,000.

Needless to remark that the outrage was the occasion for strong feeling and indignant denunciation among the Indians and the fair-minded whites. Yet something worse was in store for the poor missionary. Accused in New Westminster of having been an abettor to the "assault" of which the Indians were said to have been the perpetrators, he was condemned to one year's imprisonment,[6] while the principal party received a sentence of six months. But in answer to numerous newspaper articles, petitions and letters from the two Catholic bishops of the province, the prisoners were almost immediately liberated.

Nevertheless there is no denying that the inter-

[6]Exactly the term that the constable who arrested him told Father Chirouse he would be sentenced to.

ference of the Lillooet bigots was a serious blow to discipline, good morals and order among the native tribes, especially those of the south, whose officers became, naturally enough, averse to courting imprisonment by enforcing village regulations.

On the other hand, though the practice of corporal punishment among the Indians was certainly countenanced, nay encouraged, by the Church on the Pacific, it can scarcely be said to have originated with her. Even in prehistoric times, the natives of several British Columbia tribes resorted to such an expedient in a spirit of atonement for delinquencies. To our personal knowledge this was the case with the Chilcotins, who formerly used to ask for some such penances of their shamans. Likewise, when Father De Smet first visited the Kootenay Indians, in 1840, he was soon aware that among them "every attempt at seduction, either by young men or by adults, was punished by a severe flogging."[7]

To the credit of the same year (1892) we may put, as counterpoise to this indignity, a great meeting of the tribes for religious exercises at St. Mary's Mission, which was attended to by no less than seven bishops, besides several other Church dignitaries and a number of priests from the east. Then also was blessed at Victoria St. Andrew's Cathedral, a beautiful brick building commenced in 1890. It measured 150 feet by 85, and its spire reached 175

[7]Letter to Hon. S. F. Talpan, St. Louis, May, 1870.

feet from the ground. It was solemnly opened to public worship on October 30, 1892.

Then, as the results of the existing Indian industrial schools within the province were deemed satisfactory, a similar institution was established in Kamloops, which opened for the first time its doors on April 15, 1893, to the children of the Shushwap Indians. Father Carion had lately been stationed at Okanagan: as his experience of such work surpassed that of any other priest on the mainland or the Island, he was put at the head of the establishment, with several Sisters of St. Ann as teachers.

In the north Father Morice was then, in virtue of special powers, making a tour of confirmation throughout his extensive district, as Bishop Durieu's health did no longer allow him to undertake such a trip as his administering of that sacrament would have entailed (1893).

Meantime the city of Vancouver was growing at a prodigious rate. To meet some of the needs created by the increase in the population, the Sisters of Providence established there, in the course of 1894, a hospital which was prosperous from the days of its inception. Then, with a view to forming an indigenous clergy for the new centres of the mainland, a seminary was inaugurated in 1895, of which Father Emile Bunoz, a worthy priest arrived some time before, became the director. Unfortunately the results of that institution have not been commensu-

rate with the pecuniary sacrifices its maintenance has entailed.[8]

We have now reached the end of the last year within the scope of this work. However, before we bring it to a close, we shall add to the foregoing a few hurried notes on later events which may be considered as landmarks in the ecclesiastical history of British Columbia, embracing a period too near us to allow of the proper developments.

In the first place we might mention the death at St. Joseph's Hospital, Victoria, of the veteran Mr. Mandart. He passed to a better life in the fall of 1896, after over thirty-four years of good labours, mostly in the mission of Sanich.

In June of 1896 there arrived at William's Lake four members of the Institute of the Sisters of the Instruction, a teaching Order whose headquarters are at Le Puy, France. These took charge of the school for Indian girls vacated by the Sisters of St. Ann. The new Congregation has since established itself at New Westminster and at Sechelt.

The year 1896 likewise saw the arrival on the mainland of a young priest, Rev. François Thomas, O.M.I., who soon proved himself by his zeal for the salvation of souls a worthy successor to his compatriot, Father Le Jacq. He reached New Westminster by the end of September, and arrived at William's Lake on May 17, 1897. Thence he has

[8]It had to be closed in 1909.

ever since attended with marked success to the spiritual interests not only of the Shushwaps, the Chilcotins and the Lower Carriers, but also of the Catholics among the whites of Caribou and district.

Father Thomas hailed from Brittany, the western-most province of France. From the very opposite part of that country, such as it stood prior to the Franco-German war, came the following year a no less zealous worker in the Lord's vineyard. This was Rev. Victor Rohr, O.M.I., who reached the lower mainland in September, 1898. In April, 1899, he was stationed at St. Mary's Mission, whence he had in charge the Indians of the Lower Fraser, Douglas and Lillooet.

As a result of the strenuous life he had led in the north, Father Le Jacq had long been practically an invalid. He departed this life at the hospital of New Westminster on January 23, 1899.

The venerable head of the New Westminster diocese was now bending under the weight of his prolonged labours in the most arduous fields of the country. Rev. Augustine Dontenwill became his coadjutor, and was consecrated titular Bishop of Germanicopolis on August 22, 1897.

Twelve days before, the Church of Vancouver Island had become for the fifth time deprived of its chief pastor by the death of Mgr. Lemmens in Guatemala, South America. On June 29th of the following year Rev. Alexander Christie succeeded him, only to be transferred in 1899 to the archiepis-

copal See of Oregon City, when the Rt. Rev. Bertrand Orth took his place at Victoria (June 10, 1900).

About the same time (June 1, 1899), death claimed the veteran Bishop of New Westminster, Mgr. Durieu, whose place among the Indians can never be filled. By this sad event, his title and prerogatives passed to his coadjutor.

The Oblate fathers had long before succeeded the secular priest to whom we owe the foundation of the parish of Vancouver. On July 16, 1899, the Most Rev. Ad. Langevin, Archbishop of St. Boniface, laid there the corner-stone of a large church, all of stone, which is the finest religious edifice west of St. Boniface. It was blessed in the early weeks of 1901.

The previous year (1900) the Benedictine fathers established themselves at Cloyoquot, Vancouver Island, where they started an industrial school for the Indians to whose spiritual needs they minister. In 1903 the Marist fathers became a further acquisition, which was so much the more welcome as experience had amply shown that the secular clergy could not, for the lack of recruits, suffice alone for the population of the Island, limited as it may be. The Marists took charge of the parish and mission of Cowichan.

On the 19th of June of the same year, the episcopal See of Vancouver Island, whose official name had so far been more or less of an anomaly in the Church, was changed to that of Victoria, which was

at the same time raised to the rank of an archbishopric, with the diocese of New Westminster and the Vicariate-Apostolic of the Mackenzie as suffragans. The island diocese had so far been a suffragan to the American See of Oregon City; the new arrangement gave it its proper place among the Canadian ecclesiastical divisions.

Then, to be entirely up to date in these notes, we may mention the resignation of Archbishop Orth in April, 1908, and the erection of the Prefecture-Apostolic of the Yukon, with Father Bunoz, O.M.I., as titulary, and the country north of the 54th degree of latitude as territory. Finally we see Victoria reverting to the rank of a simple bishopric, while the city of Vancouver, on the mainland, is raised to that of an archiepiscopal See. To the former Rev. Alexander McDonald has been appointed on October 1, 1908.

EPILOGUE

As we close our pages our attention is called to the following remarks in the book of a Protestant clergyman, who was for a number of years missionary to a western Indian tribe: "The Roman Catholic Church has been successful in making converts, but not in civilizing and elevating the Indian. Their ritual is attractive to the Indian mind, and the ceremony of baptism admits them to the Church; but they lack the inspiring influences that flow from the faith in Christ, and the indwelling of the Divine Spirit in their hearts."[1]

We fancy that not a few of those who have perused the present work will be tempted to indulge in a broad smile at the expense of the author of the foregoing remarks. For our own part, we wonder whether he has ever heard of those native flowers of Christian holiness known as Catherine Tehgahkwita, Louise Sighouin, and so many others, who shone in savage society as the possessors of heroic virtues, simply because they were blessed with "the indwelling of the Divine Spirit in their hearts." We have always been under the impression that the Catholic Church was very commonly regarded as the great nursery of saints. Of course, one who is still possessed of the antiquated notion that her system chiefly consists in ceremonies cannot be expected to understand this.

Comparisons are proverbially odious, and we are

loath to follow Mr. McLean on this ground. In spite of what we personally know of the inner workings of a much vaunted Protestant mission on the North Pacific coast, we are quite ready to give its founder credit for unusual tact and perseverance, which made his people adopt most of the outward practices of our civilization, though their aboriginal laws with regard to land tenure and their social organization—with not a few of the customs derived therefrom—have remained unaltered. We do not speak of their morals: there are blemishes dear to the native heart which only the firing-iron of the confessional can ferret out and destroy.

Were we bent on following the above quoted minister in his implicit comparisons, we might retaliate by inviting him to inspect, say, the Sechelt and the Skwamish villages on the sea coast. There, in addition to all the material improvements and outward observances existing at the Protestant mission alluded to, he would find aborigines entirely regenerated from a moral standpoint, not simply bedaubed with a varnish of civilization unequal to the task of hiding from view many shortcomings in the line of Christian perfection. We might refer the author of those unmerited strictures to the noble work of the Ile à la Crosse and so many other missions east of the Rockies. We might quote for his benefit the so flattering appreciation by a Protestant gentleman of the labours of a certain "prince of missionaries" among the natives to the west of the same range of mountains and of their wonderful results.

But *cui bono?* Why insist on a point which so many non-Catholics who wrote from personal knowledge have so clearly settled? In undertaking this work we never expected we should have to defend the Catholic missionaries from possible aspersions on the result of their exertions. We had no thesis to sustain, merely historical truth to establish. Yet we feel that the reader who has gone through our pages with some degree of attention will need no further light to form an opinion on the subject. We imagine that he will as easily answer our parting query: Why is it that, while Protestant laymen in a position to speak are practically unanimous in recognizing the transformation wrought out by Catholic effort among the natives—a transformation which some of their own clergymen admit—the few who cannot see it are Protestant missionaries?[1]

[1]From a recent book by a Protestant explorer we glean the following concerning one of the northernmost tribes: "The Dog-Ribs are very strict in the observance of the outward forms of the Catholic Church. No meal was ever eaten in my presence, during a two months' residence among them, without grace being repeated in concert, and it sometimes required a strong effort of the imagination to see anything to be thankful for. The Sunday services were very ceremonious functions, which always terminated in a feast when in camp. If travelling, prayers were said before the day's journey was begun. They displayed heroic faith when they knelt in the snows of the Barren Ground to offer up prayers with chattering teeth, shifting their rosaries with half frozen fingers. In their hymn and prayer books they carried from one to a dozen cards and photographs, which, even if they were all perfectly alike, were carefully spread out upon the blanket before their possessor before the service began" ("Explorations in the Far North," by F. Russell, Cambridge, Mass., 1898). If this *heroic faith*, this devotion to Christian practices under such circumstances, do not proceed from the "indwelling of the Divine Spirit," we might be pardoned for asking Dr. McLean what can its origin be. We have always been under the impression that faith, a divine virtue, was a direct gift of God.

THE END.

APPENDIX D.

TYPICAL ERRORS CONCERNING RIEL AND HIS ACTION.

Childhood has inalienable rights to which correspond as many duties for the educator. As an impression received at school cannot be obliterated without difficulty, it stands to reason that anything even remotely offending historical accuracy, as well as morals or religious truth, must be severely banished from the curriculum of the youth's studies. Now here is what we read in a school book "authorized for use in the provinces of Manitoba, Ontario and British Columbia," with regard to the Red River troubles:

"The storm centre was the French half-breed party, the *Métis,* led by Louis Riel. Riel was the son of a white father and a half-breed mother, and had been educated in Montreal for the priesthood. Fluency of speech and magnetism of manner gave him ready control over his compatriots; unchecked ambition and extraordinary vanity blinded him to the folly of resisting the authority of the Dominion. There was no one in the colony to restrain his madness. But for the courage and tact of Donald A. Smith, acting as the agent of the Dominion government, affairs might have taken a worse turn than they did. Archbishop Taché . . . did not return until the frenzy of rebellion had spent itself in murder. . . .

"There was every prospect of a bloodless settlement of the difficulty, when a sudden fit of madness on Riel's part precipitated a tragedy. Among some prisoners whom the latter had thrust into Fort Garry, as enemies of the 'Provisional Government,' was a young Ontario immigrant named Thomas Scott. This unfortunate youth, Riel picked out to be his instrument in terrorising his opponents. Court-martialled and condemned upon the charge of treason, Scott was led out before the walls of Fort Garry and shot. The news of this brutal murder raised a storm of indignation in eastern Canada. A force of seven hundred regulars and volunteers was chosen to proceed at once to

the scene of the rebellion. . . . At the approach of the troops all military ardour and pride of office died down within Riel's breast. He promptly fled from the scene of his transient glory to find a refuge in the United States."

The above is mild in comparison with the ravings of some English writers, on whom Riel's name usually produces the same effect as a red rag on a bull. Yet let us now examine this passage of a book destined for the youth of Western Canada, and count the inaccuracies it contains.

First. Riel's mother was a white woman and not a halfbreed, while his father was not a white man, but a halfbreed. This point, which has nothing to do with racial susceptibilities or sectarian prejudices, is in itself a safe gauge of the care with which some of the school books for the Middle West have been prepared.

Second. Riel's ambition, though not a myth, had certainly limits, since an author who does not tire of deriding him tells us that the halfbreed leader emphatically declared in his presence: "I only wish to retain power until I can resign it to a proper government" ("The Great Lone Land," p. 134).

Third. There was on his part so little folly in resisting the Dominion authorities that this very resistance gained for the country of his birth practically all that he had risen for.

Fourth. Even though Riel had been in need of restraining influences—and a young man of twenty-five can always profit by the advice of older men—it is not correct to say that there was nobody to restrain him, since Mr. Ritchot, Father Lestanc and others were within his reach, and, as a matter of fact, did at times help him by the moderation of their counsels.

Fifth. Donald A. Smith no doubt acted for the best; but having been away at the beginning of the troubles and being a Hudson's Bay Company man, it was difficult for him to see the situation in its proper light. Hence, though, personally, we believe that his intervention had ultimately good results, the rôle he then played has not met with universal approval. (See Geo. Dugas' *Histoire véridique*, pp. 138-39.)

Sixth. We have already seen that there never was a Red River rebellion, and, therefore,

Seventh. Scott's execution, regrettable as it may have been, was not a murder.

Eighth. The sudden fit of madness was not on the side of Riel, but on that of the Portage men, according to the historian Begg ("this ended this *mad-like* expedition"), and any sober mind will readily see that their rising against the only authority then in the country, a government which was recognized by the whole colony and which their own representatives had contributed in forming (since Riel had been elected without the opposition of any of those present at the Convention), must ultimately be held responsible for Scott's fate.

Ninth. The news of his execution did indeed raise "a storm of indignation" in Ontario, but not in Quebec, which lies at least as far east.

Tenth. It is a pure invention and an historical untruth to even imply as plainly does the author of the incriminated school book, that Wolseley's expedition had for object to avenge the death of Scott. It had been ordered before any tidings of the same had transpired in Canada, not to say England, which alone had jurisdiction over the regulars who took part in it. (See our *Aux Sources de l'Histoire manitobaine*, p. 93.)

Eleventh. It is most unfair and historically incorrect to write that "at the approach of the troops all military ardour and pride of office died down within Riel's breast," since the halfbreed leader had never been animated by any such sentiments, but on the contrary had often to wrangle on that very point with his lieutenant O'Donoghue, who was in favour of armed resistance to the approaching force. Gen. Butler's "Great Lone Land" is a work well known in Canadian reading circles, and we have seen it testify to Riel's pacific dispositions; is it honest to thus falsify history and force the dicta of ignorant or prejudiced minds on an unsuspecting youth?

APPENDIX E.

RIEL'S LAST LETTER TO HIS MOTHER.

My dear Mother,

I received your letter of benediction, and yesterday, Sunday, I asked Father André to place it on the altar during the celebration of mass, in order that I might be under the shadow of its blessing. I asked him afterwards to put his hands on my head that I might worthily receive it, as I could not attend Church. He thus had diffused upon me the grace of mass, with its abundance of spiritual and temporal benefits. To my wife, to my children, my brother and sister-in-law and other relatives, who are very dear to me, I say farewell.

Dear Mother, it is the prayer of your eldest son that your prayers and beseechings in his behalf ascend to the throne of Jesus Christ, to Mary, and St. Joseph, my good protector, and that the mercy and abundant consolation of God fill you and my wife, my children and other relatives with all spiritual blessings from generation to generation, in consideration of the great blessing you have poured upon myself; on yourself especially for having been a good mother to me, that your faith and hope, your charity and example be as a tree laden with excellent fruit in the present and the future, and when your last day arrives that the good God may be so much pleased with your pious spirit that He will have it taken up from earth on the wings of the angels.

It is now two o'clock in the morning of my last day on earth, and Father André has told me to be ready for the great event. I listened to him, and am prepared to do everything according to his advice and earnest recommendation. God holds me in His hand to keep me in peace and calmness as oil held in a vessel which cannot be disturbed. I do what I can to keep myself ready for any event, remaining quiet in accordance with the pious exhortations of the venerable Archbishop Bourget.

Yesterday and to-day I prayed to God to reassure you

and send you all sweet consolations. In order that your heart may not be disturbed by anxiety and trouble I am brave and embrace you all with affection. I kiss you as a dutiful son, and my dear wife I embrace as a Christian husband, according to the conjugal spirit of the Catholic union. I embrace you, children, in the breadth of Divine mercy, and my brothers and sisters-in-law and all relatives and friends I embrace with all the good feeling of which my heart is capable.

Dear Mother, I am your affectionate, obedient and submissive son,

LOUIS DAVID RIEL.

Prison of Regina, 16th November, 1885.

APPENDIX F.

RELIGIOUS STATISTICS OF THE FAR NORTH.

The late Anglican Bishop Bompas having written that the number of the Indians under instruction of the Catholic and Anglican communions "may not greatly differ" in the Far North, the author of this work applied for information on this score to Rt. Rev. Bishop Breynat, the present Vicar-Apostolic of the Mackenzie, and received the following reply:

"I cannot give you from memory the exact figures representing the Catholic and Protestant populations of each post of the Mackenzie. But what I shall say will suffice to show you the inaccuracy of Bishop Bompas' assertion. Let us consider successively the missions situated along the Athabasca and Mackenzie Rivers and around the lakes which they cross. Calling each place by its civil name as used by the Hudson's Bay Company, here are the missions attended by Indians who are *all* Catholics, without a single Protestant:

Fort McMurray,
" McKay, or Red River,
" Chippewayan,
" Fond du Lac,
" Smith,
" Resolution,

Fort Rae,
" Providence,
" des Liards,
" Nelson,
" Good Hope,
" Arctic Red River.

"The Church of England has resident missionaries only at Fort Chippewayan, for the whites of that post, and at:
Fort Hay River, where about half of the population is Catholic;
Fort Simpson, where the same proportion of the people is Catholic;
Fort Norman, where two-thirds of the natives are Catholic;
Fort McPherson, where they are all Protestant—about 150.

"We formerly had a mission at that post. To take our good Loucheux away from the fanaticism of their Protestant compatriots, who went as far as to set Father Giroux's house on fire, they have been removed to Arctic Red River, where they number from 140 to 150.

"It must be remarked that the most important posts, of a population varying from 450 to 750 or 800 souls, are: Chippewayan, Fond du Lac, Resolution, Rae and Good Hope. In those places there is not a single Protestant Indian. At Hay River the entire population is about 140; at Simpson and at Norman, from 250 to 300.

"In short, I do not believe that the native population professing Protestantism exceeds 500, if it even reaches that number."

The Catholic Indians and halfbreeds of the Mackenzie are estimated at 11,000 in 1909, and those of Athabasca at 5,000. The Catholic population of the western dioceses is to-day as follows: St. Boniface, 123,000 (of whom about 45,000 belong to the Ruthenian rite); St. Albert, 52,100 (12,780 Ruthenians); Prince Albert, 44,000 (12,000 Ruthenians); Vancouver, 25,000; Victoria, 12,000; Yukon, about 3,500.

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ERRATA

Vol. I, p. 53, line 11, instead of (*1760*) read (*1763*).

Vol. I, p. 98, line 20, instead of *Charles* read *Jean-Baptiste.*

Vol. II, p. 6, line 21, instead of *who* read *which.*

Vol. II, p. 300, line 9, add *Island* to *Vancouver.*

Vol. II, p. 398, line 11, reference omitted: [1]*Rev. John McLean, "The Indians," p. 331. Toronto, 1889.*

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